HISTORY OF INDIA

BY

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AND

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

RADHAKUMUD MOOKERJI, M.A., P.R.S., PH.D.

Ithihasa-Siromani, Professor and Head of the Department of Indian History, Lucknow University

PART I. HINDU INDIA.

Madras:

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PREFACE.

THIS book is intended to present to the student a simple and continuous narrative of the political and social history of India down to the epoch of the Muhammadan conquest. A certain amount of detail has had necessarily to be imported in order to render the narrative continuous and effective; but care has been taken not to burden the student with unessential names and facts. Wherever possible we have tried to put in accounts of the social and economic life of the people, to trace the growth of cultural movements and to show the influences that were at work in the making of the complex known as the Hindu civilisation. The history of South India has received due prominence and been brought down to the times of the foundation of the Empire of Vijayanagar which stood forward as the bulwark of Hinduism against the aggression of Islam from the Deccan. We have tried to use only standard works on the subject and original sources of information, either in their texts or in translations. We have also taken care to give the prominent views on points on which no final decisions have been secured. We have endeavoured hard to be quite up-to-date in our presentation and to show a profound regard for the works and opinions of eminent Indian scholars, while not losing sight of the conclusions arrived at by European and foreign scholarship.

A chronological table giving "the annals of politics and culture," a fairly large list of books for reference and advanced study, and an index along with six maps

showing the political condition of India during different epochs form the mechanical equipment of the book. Only a portion of the sources used have been indicated in the foot-notes and in the list.

We are profoundly thankful to Dr. Radhakumud Mookerji of the Lucknow University for his Introduction.

C. S. SRINIVASACHARI,

December, 1927. M. S. RAMASWAMI AIYANGAR.

INTRODUCTION.

PROFESSORS C. S. Srinivasachariar and M. S. Ramaswami Aiyangar deserve to be congratulated on their production of a History of India so well suited to the requirements of the Intermediate and High School students, both by the matter presented and the manner of its presentation. The primary fact that may be urged against a subject like Indian History is that it is not such a well-defined, unified, and organic whole as a subject like the History of England, or the history of most other countries of the world. The History of England, for instance, has been, since the days of King Alfred, a history which has involved the whole of England in its processes, and evolution through the ages, and has been developed and directed from one centre and source of sovereign authority. The whole of England and, for the matter of that, the United Kingdom, has been organised as a unit under the control of a Unitary State, so that no part of it could have any separate life or history of its own. Thus the course of English History has ever run smooth and clear in one channel and has not been lost at any time in pools or backwaters or different channels. It can always be easily traced and studied in all its stages with reference to the single, central, and supreme sovereign that regulates the general and common life of the country. But it is difficult to discover this unity in the drama of Indian History. The very physical basis of this history is supposed to lack this unity. If India cannot be considered a single country but only a collection of many countries, a mere geographical expression for a continent, how can she ever have a history in the sense in which England, an indisputable geographical unit, has a history, a history that affects equally all her parts and peoples? And so India, through the ages and millenniums, in the entire course of her long and chequered history, has

rarely presented a history that is common for the whole of India. Rather has it usually been a history that has developed from different, and even mutually independent, centres, losing its unity in a variety of separate and local histories evolving on lines of their own, with but few points of contact or agreement and more of conflict between them. Political history in India has not been unicentral but multicentral, and cannot be traced and studied as a whole, but only in parts, fragments, in missing links, interruptions, and isolated restorations, in the different histories of her many regions and peoples. No particular province or people in India can claim the monopoly of making her history. It has flowed not in one but different channels. The whole has been vitalised from different centres that have changed from age to age. Beginning from *Sapta-sindhu* in the remote Rigvedic age, the centre of culture and public life in India has shifted with the progress of Aryan expansion successively to *Brahmavarta*, *Brahmarṣi-desa*, *Madhyadesa* and *Aryavarta*, and, in the historical period, to certain cities like Pataliputra, Purusapura and Kanauj, the head-quarters of the three largest empires that Hindu India has seen. But apart from the special contributions of her different regions and peoples to the general life and history of India, there are other strands making up that synthetic and complex web. Indian History is to be studied not merely as a history of so many provinces and peoples controlled by their own governments, Maurya, Kushan, Andhra or Gupta in the North, or Pallava, Chola and Chalukya in the South, or Moslem, Maratha, Sikh and British in more recent times. A hardly less important and interesting part of that history is concerned with the different systems of thought and culture, Brahmanical, Buddhist, Jaina or Tantrik, that have gone into the making of the complex called the Indian civilisation. Viewed as political history, Indian History loses very often its unity, and has accordingly to be studied in the local annals, but viewed as cultural history, as a history of thought and civilisation to

which the methods of chronological history and of the exact sciences do not fully apply, it has a considerable unity and organic growth to record.

It is a matter of great satisfaction to find that the learned authors of the work to which I have been so kindly asked by them to contribute an Introduction have kept in view the points of weakness and strength in the subject of their treatment. The work is very sound and satisfactory in point of both general and local history, in bringing out the unity and distinctive features of Indian culture and civilisation in their different phases and periods, and in describing the parts played by the different regions of India at different times in her political history. As may be expected, the part played by the South, so usually neglected, has been very fully dealt with The same may be said about the contributions of Jainism to Indian history and culture. Pre-historic India has been also very satisfactorily dealt with on the basis of the latest archæological discoveries. On the whole, the work represents considerable advance on works of the same scope and standard by utilising the most up-to-date material and results of researches in different fields of Indian History, while the material is presented in a manner and method, in a simple, logical, and lucid language that must considerably add to the attractions of the volume as a most useful text-book for the Intermediate and High School students.

In conclusion, a word of acknowledgment and commendation is due to the well-known Printers and Publishers, Messrs. Srinivasa Varadachari and Co., Madras, for the get-up of the work and the high standard of printing always associated with the numerous publications by which they are so effectively contributing to the advancement of learning in India.

The University,
LUCKNOW,
November, 1927.

RADHAKUMUD MOOKERJI.

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A HISTORY OF INDIA.

CHAPTER I.

INDIA: ITS PHYSICAL FEATURES—THEIR INFLUENCE ON HISTORY.

Bounded by the mighty Himalayas on the north, and washed by the Indian Ocean on the south, our vast country stretches over a very wide area. The peninsular portion of it is washed by the Arabian Sea on the west and by the Bay of Bengal on the east, both of which meet at Cape Comorin, the southernmost point of the country lying about 8° north of the Equator. Peninsular India lies almost entirely within the tropical region; in the interior it is for the most part a low plateau called the Deccan which is flanked on the west by the high Western Ghats and on the east by the low Eastern Ghats. The two Ghat ranges may be said to meet in the Nilgiri Hills, the highest peak of which is the Dodabetta (8640 feet high); while to the north of the Nilgiris lies the highest part of the table-land of Mysore across which flows the Kaveri river from its source in Coorg. South of the Nilgiris is the famous Palghat Gap through which the railway runs which connects the east coast with the west coast.

Peninsular India

From the Gulf of Cambay, right along the west coast there is a narrow strip of land between the Ghats and the Arabian Sea. This coast strip receives the full force of the monsoon rains which dash against the Western Ghats and it is generally damp and fertile, growing plenty of rice. In ancient times there was a great deal of trade between ports on this coast and those of Egypt, Babylonia, Arabia and the Mediterranean countries.

The West Coast Strip

There are a number of good harbours on this side. The northern portion of the coast is the Konkan and the southern portion is the famous Malabar Coast. The ports of Surat, Cochin and Calicut were famous even in ancient days.

On the east, from the delta of the Ganges right down to Cape Comorin there is a similar coast-strip stretching up to the broken Eastern Ghats inland.

The East Coast

This strip is much broader and has several large rivers flowing through it like the Mahanadi, the Godavari, the Krishna and the Kaveri, besides smaller streams, all of which drain the waters of the Deccan table-land. The southern portion of it was known in ancient days as the Coromandel (*Chola-mandalam*) Coast. The region south of Madras is now known as the Carnatic. It is generally dry, but gets plenty of rain in some months of the year from the north-east monsoon. Artificial means are adopted for irrigating the land by canals, tanks, etc , and enough crops, especially rice, are raised to sustain a dense population. In ancient times there were some good ports on this coast, many of which, like Masulipatam, have now been choked up with sand and silt. Ships have got generally to anchor a few miles from the shore as the sea near it is very shallow and agitated greatly by the surf. We have an artificial harbour at Madras; and the one now under construction at Vizagapatam will be a natural one.

The Carnatic

The wide Deccan Plateau is in the shape of a triangle with its apex facing south. But it is not a land of great fertility. Through it pass the rivers that take their rise in the Western Ghats and flow eastwards cutting gorges through the Eastern Ghats. The river-valleys are fertile strips of land. Portions of this region are famous for their black cotton soil; and the people here have grown cotton, woven cotton and worn cotton from time immemorial. Fewer food-crops are grown in the Deccan; there

The Deccan Plateau

are fewer villages and towns than in the coast strips; and the population is much less dense. But the land has been important in its own way.

The Vindhyan Barrier

In the north the plateau is fringed by several ranges of hills, running roughly from the south-west to the north-east as far as the Rajmahal Hills in Bengal abutting on the valley of the Ganges. On either side of the sacred Narmada river which flows along with its sister river the Tapti into the Arabian Sea, are the Vindhya and the Satpura mountains which gradually diminish in height towards the east and merge into the highlands of interior Orissa and Chota Nagpur. Both the Tapti and the Narmada form broad alluvial flats at their mouths in the shallow Gulf of Cambay. It is to the south of the Tapti river that the Deccan plateau proper begins.

The basin of the Narmada, the barrier between the North and the South

The Narmada basin is the real parting of Hindustan from the Deccan (Peninsular India). The river is held sacred throughout its course; and Amarakantak where it rises is one of the most sacred spots in India. The southern hill districts of Central India culminating in the Vindhyas and the northern hill districts of the Central Provinces culminating in the Satpuras form the two halves of the Narmada basin. They are inhabited by wild tribes of aboriginal people, who have been as yet little affected by the Hindu religion and civilisation. In ancient times it was very difficult for people to cut a way through this belt of hills and forests; and hence the connection from the plains of the north to the Deccan was either through the land-routes on either coast or by the sea.

Historical influence of this barrier

This fact has constantly to be borne in mind; and the Deccan and Peninsular India have had their own kingdoms and history as distinct from those of Northern India.

The great Hindustan plain, called Aryavarta in ancient times, contains the basins of the great rivers, the Ganges and the Indus. In some respects this plain is the most important physical feature of India; and "within the basin of the Ganges have ever been founded the chief kingdoms of the plains, the most ancient cities and the earliest centres of civilisation, of industry and of wealth." There is a level flat plain stretching from the delta of the Ganges to that of the Indus, except for the low-lying Aravalli Hills which divide Rajputana into two unequal parts. The Ganges together with its great tributaries rising in the Himalayas, *viz.*, the Jumna, the Gandak and the Gogra, drains the southern slopes of the Himalayas from about the region of Simla eastward, carrying wealth and fertility to the plains of the United Provinces, Bihar and Bengal. From source to outflow the whole river is sacred; Hardwar where the river emerges into the plains from the Himalayan region is a sacred place of pilgrimage. Allahabad, where the parallel river of the Jumna, almost equally sacred, joins the Ganges, is the true Prayaga "the most sacred bourne of Hindu pilgrimage." Delhi, for long the Imperial capital of India, and Agra, the favourite city of the Mughal Emperors, are situated on the banks of the Jumna. The populous city of Lucknow, the capital of the province of Oudh, is on one of the tributaries of the Ganges. Cawnpore, the chief manufacturing city in the plains of Hindustan, Benares, the most sacred of all Hindu cities, with Sarnath, a Buddhist place of pilgrimage, situated three miles to its north, and Patna, the ancient Pataliputra, the capital of the most powerful Hindu empires in the past, are all situated on the Ganges. Sixty miles to the south of Patna, almost fringing the hill-

The Indo-Gangetic Basin

The Ganges Valley

Its chief towns

region of Chota Nagpur, is the town of Gaya sacred to Hindus and Buddhists alike.

A useful tributary of the Jumna is the Chambal which drains the gradual slopes of the Central Indian plateau. When the Ganges reaches Bengal, which is largely a silt-formed plain, it splits into many channels which again throw out their own distributaries. The chief branch is the Hooghly on the eastern bank of which is situated the city of Calcutta, which was till 1912 the capital of India and is still the largest city in the country. Lower Bengal is the united deltaic region of the great rivers, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra. The latter river takes its source on the northern side of the Himalayas near the sacred lake of Manasarowar and after flowing steadily through eastern Tibet, turns the east flank of the Himalayas and twists into Assam, finally turning the western flank of the Khasia Hills. After a southerly course for some distance it receives the Surma river and joins the Ganges; and the united stream of the three great river-systems takes the name of Meghna and rushes to the sea. Assam is now noted for its tea-plantations. Lower Bengal is a vast stretch of rice-fields and hamlets hidden among its groves of plantain, bamboo and cocoanut; and the Sunderbans, as the deltaic regions near the sea are called, is a wilderness of forests and swamps, the steady silt of the rivers always throwing up new levels and pushing out new headlands into the sea.

The Gangetic Delta and Lower Bengal

The Brahmaputra river

The Sunderbans

The monsoon winds blowing over the Bay of Bengal and rushing across the plains over the Hindustan basin are obstructed by the Himalayas and proceed west, gradually diminishing in intensity. The flatness of the Hindustan plains makes the rivers run slowly so that their waters can be easily used for irrigation; and the rivers

themselves are very useful for boat and steamer traffic. The eastern half of the plains gets more rain than the west, part of which is taken up by the desert of Thar and Sind.

The Thar Desert

The Thar is situated to the west of the Aravalli Hills and continues westward almost up to the Rann of Cutch. This desert played a very important part in the history of the country. The present-day Rajputs are what they are, largely because of this desert.

The basin of the Indus

West of the desert region is the basin of the Indus, which rising in the Himalayas flows north-westward on the mountains, and then descends south into the plains through one of the grandest gorges in the world. The Punjab and Sind through which the river flows into the sea are hot and dry plains; and no part of them enjoys a regular and systematic rainfall. The frontier hills west of the Indus do not also get any rainfall in spite of their altitude. Thus the physical characteristics of the Indus basin differ greatly from those of the Ganges basin. The name India is itself derived from the Indus as the region of the river basin was once part of the Persian Empire and became thus known to the ancient Greeks who transferred the name to the whole country.

The river system of the Punjab

Simla, the summer capital of the Viceroy and Governor-General, is on a spur of the Himalayas between the upper basins of the Ganges and the Indus. Immediately to the north of Simla, the Sutlej flows across the Himalayas and the Siwalik Mountains south-westwards into the Indus. The smaller rivers of the Punjab lie between the Sutlej and the Indus. Karachi, which stands at the western limit of the Indus delta, is the nearest port to England and has a good harbour and hence is of growing importance. The irrigation system of the Indus, rapidly developed by the English, is very important

and fruitful, for to it we owe the large production of wheat and cotton in the Punjab and Sind.

The Himalayan region

The Himalayan region, which fences off India from the lofty tableland of Tibet, stretches for a length of 1500 miles and varies in breadth from about 150 to 250 miles; and it really consists of three great mountain ranges—the lowest and outmost range on the southern side throwing off the Siwaliks in the west and forming the southern boundary of Nepal and Bhutan in the east Next the two lofty main ranges come, one behind the other and contain the great snow-covered peaks. The British Dominion reaches far into the mountains in the west; and the innermost sources of the Jumna and the Ganges lie within the United Provinces. Kashmir State stretches behind the Punjab across the two main ranges of the Himalayas and the great Karakoram Range beyond and touches the Quen Lun and the Hindu Kush mountains. Kashmir indeed is a large mass of snow-covered mountains with many narrow river-valleys among them, the largest being the Vale of Kashmir, through which the Jhelum flows.

Kashmir

Paucity of passes over the Himalayas

There are not very many passes across the Himalayas and the few that exist serve as gateways of trade. Armies could not easily cross them. One of the routes leads from Darjeeling in the Eastern Himalayas to Lhassa, the capital of Tibet; from Simla another route goes along the Sutlej gorges to Tibet; and a third starts from Leh far up in Kashmir along the Karakoram Passes to Yarkand in Chinese Turkestan. These routes are very difficult to traverse, besides being steep in many places and blocked by snow for a large portion of the year.

The mountains that protect India on the north-western frontier are lower and more easy to cross; and the passes leading across them are more numerous. A series of mountain ranges, which may be called the western offshoot of the Himalayas, stretch from the sea near Karachi right up to the Hindu Kush mountains. The series is made up of three distinct ranges, the Safed Koh, the Sulaiman and the parallel chains of the Kirthar mountains lower down. The chief pass is the valley of the Kabul river which flows east from Kabul and joins the Indus. The Khyber Pass which follows this valley for some distance is the most important pass in the world, "the gateway through which warrior chiefs and armies have come to conquer the rich plains of India" during the last 2,000 years. A railway has recently been built up this Pass from Peshawar which is the gateway on the Indian side. There are other passes along the mountains lower down, like the Kurram, the Tochi, the Gomal and the Bolan Passes. The last is more important than the rest and a railway has been built through it to Quetta and beyond to the frontier of Afghanistan, overlooking the valley of Kandahar. These passes lead from Southern Baluchistan to the Indus Delta from Kandahar to the defiles of Sind, or by way of Ghazni to the Indus valley or by way of the Kabul river to the Upper Punjab. "These have always been the main channels for the flow of immigration from Central Asian steppes and valleys into the golden land of promise as well as the narrow pathways for the commerce of centuries long past." The English control by means of Peshawar, the Indian key to the

The North-Western barrier

The Khyber, Bolan and other passes

Their importance

Khyber Pass, and by means of Quetta, the outer key to the Bolan Pass.*

The North-Eastern Frontier

In the North-East Frontier where the Himalayas send on spurs running nearly north and south with long valleys between them, we have got Burma. The westernmost of these ranges separates in the north Burma from Assam and sends broad spurs westwards into Assam; lower down, the range extends into Arakan forming its hinterland and being known as the Lushai Hills and then as the Arakan Yomas.

Burma

Burma, made up wholly of parallel ranges with large rivers like the Irrawaddy and the Salween between them, is shut off on all sides by mountains which are very difficult to cross. One solitary trade-route runs from Bhamo in Upper Burma across the hills to Southern China. No railway joins Burma with India.

The Iranian Plateau; its importance.

* Note on the map the lie of the large Iranian plateau stretching westward from these ranges of mountains and also the position of the Karakoram range and the Hindu Kush mountains. The Hindu Kush which is considered by some to be the real scientific barrier on the north-west now lies mostly within Afghan territory. In ancient times some Indian monarchs like the Mauryas ruled all the regions right up to the Hindu Kush. Persia, Afghanistan and Baluchistan form the large Iranian plateau which is bounded in the north-west by the lofty Caucasus mountains and in the north-east by the loftier Pamirs. "Southward and south westward of Iran lie the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf and the long lowland which is traversed by the rivers Euphrates and Tigris. Northward to the east of the Caspian Sea is the broad lowland of Turkestan or Turan traversed by the rivers Oxus and Jaxartes draining into the Sea of Aral. Eastward is the plain of the Indus. The defence of India from invasion depends in the first place on the maintenance of British sea-power in the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean, and in the second place on our refusal to allow the establishment of alien bases of power on the Iranian plateau, especially on those parts of it which lie towards the south and east."—(Sir H. J. Mackinder in *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, pp. 27 & 28).

The defence of the country

Thus all along its land-sides, India is splendidly protected by mountains difficult to cross. Except in the north-west where the passes have facilitated invasions and where the hills are peopled by rude frontier tribes ever on the alert to make plundering descents into the plains, the other portions are secure. The coast line of the country extending from Karachi to Arakan is very long and difficult to protect against attacks by naval powers. But such attacks have been rare and the strength of the English navy is the surest safeguard in this respect. Ceylon, though seeming to be an appendage of India and also closely influenced by its culture, has had its comparatively independent existence. " Neither to-day, nor in the past has it been a mere appendage of India." Burma is equally outside the limits of the Indian continent for similar reasons.

CHAPTER II

ABORIGINAL AND NON-ARYAN RACES.

India: a museum of races

The vast sub-continent of India, whose physical features we studied in the preceding chapter, is a veritable museum of races. There are in it 43 distinct races speaking 147 different languages. Of the history of some of these, especially those who entered India in times of which any record is kept, we shall read in the following pages. But we may not probably know anything at all about the early history of many races for want of evidence as to their origin, spread and final settlement in this land of ours.

Deccan : the oldest portion of India

Geologists tell us that Peninsular India is the oldest portion of our land and that thousands and thousands of years back, it was connected with South Africa and Australia. They also say that the rich plains of Northern India watered by the Indus and the Ganges were of later growth. In short, a series of great revolutions in physical geography in the dim distant past has resulted in India taking its present shape.

Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages

It is then evident that it is in the Deccan that we must look for the earliest inhabitants of India. It is, however, impossible to know precisely who these were, what language they spoke and what culture they possessed. But archæologists are agreed that we can know something about the growth of civilisation among them by discovering the material out of which they shaped their tools and weapons. Thus they believe there was a period when man first made all implements out of stone. Crude was his workmanship and the things he made were very rough

indeed. This was known as the Palæolithic or Old Stone Age. After many centuries perhaps, man learnt how to polish and give a finish to his stone implements. In this stage he made use of pottery, and honoured the dead by giving them a decent burial. He often erected massive tombs of stone over their graves. This age is known as the Neolithic or New Stone Age. Then come, after long intervals, further stages of development when ancient men discovered the use of metals like copper, bronze and iron; and the periods are respectively called, the Copper Age, the Bronze Age and the Iron Age.

Palæolithic and Neolithic men in India

Stone implements of the Palæolithic Age are found in abundance in the Madras Presidency especially in the Chingleput District. Above these finds are to be discovered vast remains of the Neolithic or New Stone Age A large quantity of these was found by Mr. Bruce Foote primarily in the Bellary District. The same gentleman has discovered in South India the sites of several Neolithic settlements and implement-factories, where also was found wheel-made pottery in abundance. The 'cinder-mounds' of Southern India, the pre-historic objects known as 'Cup-marks' and 'Ring-marks' and the 'Ruddle drawings' in the caves of the Vindhyan Mountains—all belonging to the Neolithic Age—indicate what kind of culture Neolithic men in the Deccan possessed. In fact a scientific study of these pre-historic antiquities enlarges our knowledge of ancient men and enables us, though to a limited extent, to trace the movements of these people. Thus the oblong terra-cotta Sarcophagi* found in the districts of Chingleput, Nellore, South and North Arcot resemble those discovered near Baghdad; and this similarity suggests a close connection between the archaic Indian civilisation and that of Babylonia and Assyria.

* That is, coffins made of lime-stone, clay and sand in which the dead were placed.

Copper and Iron Ages in India

The Neolithic Age was followed in South India by the Iron Age while in Northern India a Copper Age intervened between these two. Huge pre-historic copper implements were recently discovered at Gungeria in Central India. Copper implements such as swords and spear-heads have been found at Cawnpore, Fatehgarh, Mainpuri and Muttra.

No Bronze Age in India

Antiquarians are of opinion that there is no Bronze Age in India. Such bronze materials as have been found in the pre-historic tombs of Adichanallur in Tinnevelly District were perhaps of foreign origin. "The fine bronze vases and other ornamental objects found in the more ancient tombs on the Nilgiri Hills evidently date from the early centuries of the Christian era, when the Kurumba or Pallava power commanded an extensive seaborne trade."*

The aborigines—the Kols and the Dravidians

Scanty as our knowledge is in regard to the men of the Metal Age, we are in a position to know better about the earliest inhabitants of India with whom the Aryans came in conflict. These were of two main stocks—the Kolarians (Kols) and the Dravidians. Each of these was divided into many tribes, possessed of varying degrees of civilisation and culture. The Kolarians are supposed to have come through the north-eastern passes of the Himalayas. Their own traditions about their wanderings point to a northeasterly origin. To-day they are to be found only in the north-east of India. There is also a close resemblance between their languages and those of the Assamese and other people living along the Brahmaputra and the Irrawaddy.†

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* *Imperial Gazetteer of India*, Vol. ii p. 96.

† Some scholars do not support this view.

According to available evidence these Kolarians were probably the earliest to arrive and settle in the country. A more virile and advanced people entered India through the north-west; these were the Dravidians. They must have taken possession of the more fertile tract of the country after first ejecting the Kols from their settlements. That is the reason why we find the Kols tucked away in mountain fastnesses or occupying less fertile and inaccessible areas. Let us study more in detail about each of them.

The Kols

The Kols, as has been observed, were divided into many tribes. Some of them were utter savages, while others were possessed of a few rudiments of civilisation. The Anamalai hillmen of Southern Madras, the Panians of Malabar, the leaf-wearers of the Orissa Hill States, and the Akas of Assam, represent the crudest tribes among the Kols, while the Santals of Bengal and the Kondhs of Orissa are more advanced than the rest. The Kols lived in free village-communities. They hunted and feasted together. Great care was taken in the training of their boys who were entrusted to special officers of the tribe. The Kols were skilful husbandmen. They had their own code of laws. Serious offences were punished by expulsion from the village while minor ones were visited with fines which generally took the shape of a feast to the entire clan. Some of these customs are observed even to-day by the Santals of Bengal who are regarded as the purest descendants of the ancient Kols.

The Religion of the Kols

The Kols had no caste system but observed a number of ceremonies both on marriage and funeral occasions. The Santal, for example, has to perform six ceremonies in his life-time. The Kols worshipped many spirits and demons, each clan or tribe having its own object of worship. Most of these spirits are supposed to reside in large ancient trees. They had no conception

of an omnipotent and beneficent deity watching over mankind. They worshipped these 'spirits' because they feared them. To these 'gods' they offered sacrifices such as cakes, honey and milk, small animals and fowls. In short, the Kols are mild and peace-loving, timid before strangers and merry in their own villages. To-day there are more than three millions of them, speaking languages called the *Munda*. They are mostly to be met with in the hills of Western Bengal, in the uplands of Chota Nagpur and also in the Central Provinces.

The Dravidian occupation of North India

More numerous and more advanced in civilisation than the Kols were the Dravidians, one of the earliest races found occupying large parts of India. Were they like the Kols immigrants into the land of India or were they the descendants of the men of the Metal Age in the Deccan? Acute differences of opinion exist among scholars in regard to the early origin and history of the Dravidians. Some very learned men are of opinion that the Dravidians were invaders and that they came through the north-western routes leading to the plains of Hindustan. After staying for thousands of years in the north of India, a large part of them migrated south and eventually occupied the three-sided table-land of the the Deccan. In proof of this theory, they point to the existence of a Dravidian tribe in Baluchistan, speaking the Brahui language which is closely allied to Tamil

It is argued that this large island of Dravidian speech in distant Baluchistan represents the language of those Dravidians who straggled behind while the main stream advanced into India. On the other hand, equally learned scholars maintain that the Brahuis were the remnants of an outflow of Dravidians from India into Baluchistan. But as all the great movements of peoples have been into

India and not out of India, the theory of the Dravidian Invasion of India is more probable.*

Pancha-Dravidam

Long after the Dravidians had settled in the country, the Aryans poured into India through the north-west and naturally there was considerable fighting between the new comers and the older settlers. The result of that struggle was that the Dravidians gradually retired to the south of India where they remained comparatively unmolested. An ancient Tamil tradition mentions the five Dravidian regions (*Pancha-Dravidam*) as being the Tamil, Andhra or Telugu and Kanerese countries, Maharashtra and Gujarat †

Aryan contempt of Dravidians

The Aryan conquerors have left in their sacred books their impressions of the Dravidians who were their enemies. These latter are always spoken of as Dasyus, Danavas and Rakshasas. 'Black-skin' and 'flat-nosed' are some of the expressions used against them. The Ramayana teems with references to the evil ways and power for mischief of these so-called Rakshasas But as a matter of fact the Dravidians though they might have been blacker than the Aryan invaders, proud of

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* See *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I. p. 42. It is not possible in this little book to discuss the subject at length. It is not, out of place, however, to merely mention the various views held. One view is that the Dravidians like the Celts and Cymri in Ireland are the representatives of the earliest band of Aryan immigrants into India. The late Mr Kanakasabhai Pillai maintained that the Tamils were Mongoloid in origin and that they occupied the Peninsular portion of India by the sea. The Lemurian theory, propounded by a few scholars supposes that the now submerged continent of Lemuria in the Indian Ocean was the original home of the Dravidians. Sir W. W. Hunter thought that the Kolarians and the Dravidians were really branches of the same race who entered India through different routes, the one from the north-east and the other from the north-west. In addition to these views there is the opinion held by a number of scholars that the Dravidians formed the indigenous population of South India.

† See *ibid*. Chap. XXIV, p. 593.

their white skin, were as civilised as the new-comers. This contempt of the Dravidians by the Aryan hymnists indicates that the latter had to fight their way into India every inch.

Dravidian culture

The Dravidians as known to history were a highly enterprising race of warriors and traders. They practised peaceful industry and commerce. They traded in their own vessels and carried the Indian teak, rice, muslins and peacocks to far-off Persia, Mesopotamia and Asia Minor. They were very adventurous and colonised in the earliest of times many islands and unknown regions. The Dravidian appears to have always loved order and discipline ; and very early in history the Dravidian people had formed monarchical states. Besides they had a well-defined system of administration. We shall read more about these early Dravidian states in another part of this book.

The religious ideas of the early Dravidians were undoubtedly crude. They worshipped the earth both as a god and goddess. The Rig Veda of the Aryans informs us that these Dasyus were 'Shisna-devas' which means worshippers of Shishna or Shesh. If it is so, the ancient Dravidians were a race of snake-worshippers which is not improbable in view of the existence of thousands of snake shrines in South India*. Originally the Dravidians had no

* This view of Ragozin was hotly contested by many scholars among whom M. Jivaratnam was the most insistent. Writing to the *Light of Truth* (Vol. VIII, No. 3) he takes strong exception to the view that the Dravidians had anything to do with snake-worship. Some of his arguments are:—(1) that the early Dravidian literature does not contain any mention of the serpent whatever; (2) that the early Dravidian gods are Muruga and Pillaiyar (பிள்ளையார்) and the serpent is nowhere mentioned as an accessory to these gods; (3) that the powerful Dravidian sovereigns had none of them the serpent as their royal emblem; (4) that the *Naga Puja* now observed by the Tamils was borrowed from their Aryan brothers; and (5) that there are nowhere temples specially dedicated to the serpent. However sound this contention appeared to be at the time when Mr. Jivaratnam wrote the article, the progress of modern research tends to support

caste system, no regular class of priests. These institutions were introduced later on by the Aryan colonists who brought with them refined notions of religion and philosophy. The Dravidians were gradually converted to the faith of the Brahmins. Bloody sacrifices and demon worship which formed part of their religion gave place to a loftier conception of God as a benign Being watching over the interests of humanity. With the growth of civilisation the early Dravidians occupied a foremost place in the ranks of races in ancient India. In modern times they are mainly represented by the Tamils, the Telugus, the Kanarese and the Malayalis.

Dravidian Religion

Besides the Kols and the Dravidians, other races also had penetrated into India from time to time. Of the Aryan invasion and settlement, we shall read in the next chapter. The rest of this chapter is devoted to an account of other foreign races that have found in India a permanent home.

Non-Aryans

Beyond the Himalayas there lies the vast tableland of Tibet and farther east of it is the country of China A race of people called the Mongols occupy these lands. These are very much unlike the Dravidians in physical appearance. Their head is broad, and their colour rather yellowish. They have very little hair on their face and their nose is depressed at the roots Their eyes are set somewhat obliquely. These short-statured, flat-faced people whose original home was north-west China, wandered forth in ancient times in search of new lands till at last they reached Tibet. The Himalayas must have acted as a barrier;

The Mongolians

in general the view put forth by Madam Ragozin and there is growing evidence to prove that serpent-worship was originally non-Aryan in character and that it was absorbed by the religious system of the Aryans in course of time The subject is too abstruse to be discussed even in a foot-note.

else they would have directly invaded the plain of Hindustan and then the history of India would have been quite different. As it was, the few passes or routes in the centre of the Himalayas did not encourage wholesale emigration of these people and so they slowly wandered down the valley of the Brahmaputra and ultimately occupied portions of Assam and Bengal. A number of them followed the downward course of the Chindwin, the Sitang and the Irawaddi and occupied Burma. These tribal migrations must have continued for a long time. In the result a large population especially in north and north-east India was tinged with Mongolian blood. These Mongoloid types with varying degrees of purity can be seen in Burma, Assam and the Sub-Himalayan tracts including Nepal and Bhutan. In Bengal and Orissa, the Mongols freely mixed with the Dravidians, giving rise to what is known as the Mongolo-Dravidian or Bengali type.

The Persians and Greeks

In historical times many foreign races entered India either to conquer portions of it or to find peaceful residence in it. Earliest among these are the Persians who under Darius, the son of Hystaspes, occupied North-west India. Both in the time of Alexander and after his death the north-western frontier of India was held by a crowd of Greek princelings related to the House of Bactria. These Persians and Greeks are, however, Aryans who got separated from the Indo-Aryans, centuries before.

About the beginning of the second century B C., a race of Mongolian nomads called the 'Sakas,' entered India and even carved out for themselves independent principalities in the northern and western regions of the country. Their example was followed by another wandering tribe, the Yueh-chi. The Kushans, one of the

leading clans of the Yueh-chi nation established in the early centuries of the Christian era, a big empire in north-west India. It cannot be said without possibility of doubt that the Kushans were Non-Aryans. Some scholars think that they were more or less akin to the Iranian or Persian Aryans. But no such doubt exists regarding the racial connections of the Huns, who in the 5th and 6th centuries A.D., invaded India and held large tracts of the country for a time, till they were driven out of the country finally by the seventh century.

The Sakas, the Yueh-chi and the Huns

Thus after the Aryans, many foreign races such as the Persians, the Greeks, the Sakas, the Yueh-chi and the Huns sought their political fortunes in India and in course of making their history, they freely mixed with the native population. This racial mixture went on for several centuries in North India. But the Dravidian of the South has been able to preserve his individuality and culture mainly on account of his remoteness from centres of foreign culture which were most of them in upper India.

Racial mixture in North-India

All the military raids referred to in the preceding paragraphs were expeditions conducted through land. Till the time of Vasco da Gama no foreign race thought of attacking India by sea. The Arabs no doubt in the 7th and 8th centuries attempted such an enterprise but their naval expeditions proved to be a failure. Their land enterprise through Makran and Baluchistan was however a success, and it resulted in the conquest of Sindh. The Arab sway of Sindh and other places in the neighbourhood was short-lived. It was a triumph without results. Considerably later, the Afghans, the Turks and the Mughals—all following the faith of 'Islam'—attacked India through the great historic routes of the north-west. Then came the Europeans, first as peaceful traders. Later on, they acquired the ambition to found empires in India. The story of their enterprise in our land belongs to another section of this history.

Other races

CHAPTER III.

THE ARYANS.

SECTION I. THE AGE OF THE RIG VEDA.

Long long after the Dravidians had colonised North India, there came through the north-west in wave after wave of migration, a sturdy and warlike race of people who ousting the Dravidians from their possessions in the north-west, soon spread themselves over the whole of Hindustan. These people were known by the name of Aryans. They are sometimes spoken of as Indo-Aryans to distinguish them from others of the same race who lived in Iran and other areas. The word 'Arya' means 'of good family, noble' and was originally applied by those who composed the Vedic hymns 'to distinguish their own stock from that of their enemies, the earlier inhabitants of India whom they called Dasas or Dasyus'. Of high stature and powerful build, white-skinned and aquiline-nosed, these Aryans presented in physical appearance a strange contrast to the dark-skinned and short-statured Dravidian who was the lord of the plains. In civilisation and culture also the new-comers were far superior to the older residents of India. Centuries of living in a temperate climate inclining to cold, an abundant supply of milk, meat and wheat, out-door exercise in moderation have made them one of the finest races the world has produced. A pastoral and agricultural people, they knew also how to handle skilfully their weapons which they forged at enormous cost and labour. They had not yet beheld a sea but knew how to cross a river or a lake in boats of their own make. "Their minds are open to all impressions; their thoughts are busy with the phenomena of nature; but in abstract speculation they have not yet reached

The Aryans

a very advanced stage—for they can count only up to a hundred "*

It is believed by many scholars that the Aryans who thus entered India were but a branch of a great family which they term Indo-European. Other members of this family are the Persians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Germans, the French and the English. There are many words common to the languages of these people and from that it was deduced that the forefathers of those who now speak Sanskrit, Persian, Latin, German, Greek, English and French must have once upon a time lived together in a compact area from which they must have emigrated in different directions owing either to climatic or economic causes.†

The Indo-European Family

If then we are able to discover that compact area where dwelt in distant ages the ancestors of those who now speak one or another of the languages belonging to the Indo-European family, we shall be really seeking the original home of the Sanskrit-speaking Aryans. That great German scholar, Prof. Max-Muller, expressed the view that the Aryans came to India from Central Asia and that their original home was Asia Others located the homeland of the Aryans in the steppes of South Russia. Our illustrious countryman, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, tried to prove in a most ingenious way that the Vedic Aryans started their exodus from the Arctic regions. For one thing the "original home" thus eagerly sought after by scholars should contain the *flora and fauna* the names of which are common to all the Indo-European family of languages. If this test is correct,

The Original Home of the Aryans

* See *Vedic India* by Ragozin, pp. 54-55.

† We owe this discovery to Sir Wililam Jones, once Chief Justice of Bengal, whose epoch-making address in 1786 to the Asiatic Society of Bengal laid the foundation for the scientific study of Comparative Philology.

the only area which satisfies all conditions and which therefore may be correctly considered as the common home of the Aryans is the region " bounded on its eastern side by the Carpathians, on its south by the Balkans, on its western side by the Austrian Alps and the Bohmer-wald; and on the north by the Erzgeberge and the mountains which link them up with the Carpathians." Roughly speaking the tract will include the area now occupied by Hungary, Austria and Bohemia.*

From this primitive home tribe after tribe emigrated taking with them their women and children. It is the eastern branch of this 'Indo-European people' that ultimately found its way to India. It is impossible to know with our present knowledge what routes they took to reach India. Some have suggested many fanciful routes through difficult and inaccessible areas. But a people moving with their womenfolk and cattle may be expected to take the less difficult and more easy routes. This path leads across either the Bosporus or Dardanelles, across the plateau of Asia Minor. Then passing south of Lake Van and passing through the low mountains between it and Lake Urmia they must have skirted the southern end of the Caspian reaching Mashhad from which it has always been easy to reach Herat. It is quite possible that these emigrants in the course of their march occupied the country of Bactria (Balkh) and conquered the fertile regions between the Amer Daria or Oxus and the Syr Daria†

The Aryans on their march

* *Cambridge History of India*, Vol I, pp. 66 ff. As in regard to the origin of the Dravidians so with reference to original home of the Aryans there is no unanimity among scholars. A Calcutta scholar. A.C. Das argues with much force and reason to prove that the original cradle of the Aryans was Saptasindhu which included the beautiful valley of Kashmir on the north and Gandhara on the west. See ***Rig-vedic India*** by Abinas Chandra Das. Compare with this the inferences drawn by Pargiter in his ***Ancient Historical Tradition***, p. 302.

† *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I. p. 70.

The Aryans who were thus marching towards the east as yet remained united and undivided To these we may give the name of Indo-Iranians. Fortunately we have some evidence to prove this fact. In the course of German excavations at Boghaz-koi (in Cappodocia) inscriptions were discovered containing the names of the deities Indra, Varuna and the twin brethren Nasatyas, exactly in the form in which they survive in Sanskrit. One explanation of this discovery is that "here, far to the west we have stumbled upon the Aryans on the move towards the east." Since 1400 B.C. is the date assigned for Boghaz-Koi inscriptions. we may also obtain a clue for the period when the Indo-Iranians, separated themselves into two branches, the Indo-Aryans and the Iranian-Aryans.

The Boghaz-koi inscriptions

The cause of such a separation is not difficult to seek. While the united Aryans were staying in the Iranian Plateau, there gradually grew up religious differences among them. One section of them began to worship the various powers of nature as they used to do of old such as Mithra, Varuna, Soma, Indra and so on. These received the name of Devas. Others evolved a grander and loftier conception of the universe being controlled by one Superior Being whom they called Ahura-Mazda Gradually the latter were called the Asuras as the Devas came to signify those who worshipped the elements of nature. In the course of the struggle that must have ensued, the Asuras were victorious and the Devàs were forced to seek refuge in the north-east of Iran from which after hard struggles they emerged into the Punjab.

The separation of the Iranians and the Aryans

About the life of the Aryans who thus entered the valley of the Punjab, we can know a good deal from their earliest book—the Rig Veda The word 'Rig' means a verse and 'Veda' denotes knowledge, 'the unwritten sacred lore.' The Rig Veda, by far the oldest and most

sacred of all the writings of ancient Rishis, contains 1017 hymns divided into 10 books. These hymns contain the body of religious tradition current among the priests.

The Rig Veda

These songs are valuable as they enable us to understand about the religious, social, and political institutions of the early Aryans.

The Rig Veda does not tell us anything about the mode in which the Aryans entered India; but from the mention of certain rivers and mountains we can determine the areas occupied by them in the early stages of their history. Thus the mention of the rivers Kubha (Kabul), the Suvastu (Swat) the Krumu (Kurram) and the Gomati (Gumal) indicates that the country of Afganistan and the valleys of the Swat, Kurram and Gumal had been first occupied by them. Their settlements on the Indus were also numerous They had not yet reached the ocean perhaps.

Early Expansion

That the country of the Punjab had been colonised is certain because the names of the five rivers occur in the Rig Veda. Of these the Parushni (Ravi) plays a considerable part in the history of the time, because on its banks was fought the battle of the Ten Kings. The Sarasvati between the Sutlej and the Jumna is the most important of all rivers. The river Jumna is mentioned thrice, from which it is evident that the early Aryans had reached in the Rig Vedic Age the banks of the Jumna. In all likelihood the region of the Ganges had not been colonised yet. Nor is there any mention of the river Narbada and the Vindhya Mountains. The absence of any mention of the tiger, a native of Bengal, and rice, a natural product of the south-east, similarly confirms the view that the Aryans had not yet penetrated into the heart of North India. In short the Aryans in the Rig Vedic Age occupied the Kabul valley, the Punjab and the countries to the east between the Sutlej and the Jumna.

The Rig Veda teems with references to wars and battles. There were wars with the aborigines and inter-tribal wars The former are always spoken of as Dasas, sons of darkness. One hymn speaks of 'the fleet Black Warrior' living on the banks of the Ansumati River with ten thousand troops. More important than the war with the natives, the war of one race against another, were the wars among the Aryan tribes themselves. The fertile valleys of the Indus and its tributaries must have been parcelled out among the leaders of the early invading tribes who founded kingdoms and states, often at war with each other. The earliest recorded war in the Rig Veda was, of course, the War of the Ten Kings. It was perhaps a contest between the Bharatas settled in a country known later as Brahmavarata and the tribes of the north-west.* Besides the Bharatas, two other tribes the Tritsus and the Purus loom large at this period.

Early Wars

When fighting, Aryan kings and noblemen rode on chariots of simple construction while others followed them on foot. Bows and poisoned arrows were frequently used. Lances, spears, swords, axes and slingstones were much in evidence in Vedic warfare. The Aryans doubtless possessed a large number of horses but we do not know if a cavalry was formed out of them. The battle generally began with prayers and incantations. Banks of rivers often served as sites of battles; for example, the Battle of the Ten Kings was fought on the banks of Parushni (Ravi).

Methods of Warfare

Though the Rig Vedic Aryans were past masters in the art of war, they never forgot the blessings of peace. They were good agriculturists and appear to have laboured hard by sinking wells and digging canals to irrigate their fields. Horses were used for ploughing and they raised mainly wheat and barley. The

Agricultural and Industrial Pursuits

* *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I. p. 81.

Aryans did not, at this stage, build large cities; in fact city life is not mentioned in the Rig Veda. But they erected earth-work fortifications for defence purposes. Such industries that existed in Vedic times were confined to the construction of carts and chariots and weapons of warfare. Metals were used extensively for the manufacture of domestic utensils. Gold and silver ornaments existed in plenty.

Social Organisation

The social and political organisation of the Rig Vedic Aryans rested on the patriarchal family; and consequently relationship was traced through the father. Monogamy was the rule, though the kings and chiefs often took more than one wife. Female morality was pitched high and there is no mention of polyandry. Marriage would appear to have been more or less obligatory owing to a keen desire for a male child to perform the funeral rites, and marriage ties were considered sacred. The joint family system was definitely recognised and the eldest male member of the family exercised considerable control over the conduct of the rest.

The Grama, the Vis and the Jana

The *Grama* or the village was the nucleus in the Rig Vedic society. Above it, there was the canton or the *Vis*; and groups of cantons formed the *Jana* or the people. Several scholars are of opinion that the Rig Veda does not recognise any caste system But in some of the later hymns of the Rig Veda, such as the *Purushasukta*, the four *Varnas* of the Hindu system appear.

The Rig Veda gives us very little information about the political organisation of the people. Most of the states mentioned in this sacred book were undoubtedly monarchical ones. No other type of government was recognised. The kings were normally hereditary in character. The functions of the kings were not expressly mentioned;

Political organisation in the Age of the Rig Veda

but surely some of them consisted in protecting the priests and offering sacrifices for them and for the *Vis* or the *Jana*. The kings received tributes from the subjects and also obtained a large share of the conquered land. Besides the kings there were several other officers mentioned in the Rig Veda. There were, for example, the *Senani* appointed perhaps by kings to lead expeditions, the *Gramani* who was in charge of the minor portions of the host and the *Purohita*, a very important official, the forerunner of the Brahmin statesman of the historical period, who always accompanied the king and offered advice. In the battle-field it was the *Purohita* who seconded the king's efforts for victory by offering prayers and chanting spells. The Rig Veda also recognises the existence of tribal and village assemblies, the *Samithi* and the *Sabha* whose exact functions we do not know, but which on the analogy of similar institutions in ancient Greece must have largely controlled the foreign policy of kings.

The Religion of the Veda

The religion of the Vedic Aryans was chiefly the worship of Nature. 'The different phenomena of Nature received different names and from the contemplation of these the worshipper rose to the conception of the one God of the universe. The deities which were thus worshipped and in whose honour hymns were composed are Dyaus (sky), usually invoked withPrithivi; Varuna often associated with the deity Mitra; Indra "who with his destructive thunder smote the closed (Vrihe) into pieces"; Surya and Savitri; Agni, Vayu, Maruts (storms), Rudra (thunder) and Yama. It is essential to remember that though the Vedic Indians worshipped the various phenomena of Nature as deities, yet the conception, that all the manifestations seen in the universe formed the work of One Supreme Being, was ever present in the mind of the more learned among them,

There are hymns in the Rig Veda wherin the unity of the Creator is proclaimed.

The Age of the Rig Veda

What is the age of the civilization depicted in the Rig Veda? It is a difficult question to answer. Prof. Max Muller considered that the Vedic hymns, especially the older poems, were composed between 1200B.C to 1000 B.C. Indian scholars are generally inclined to take the Vedic period to 3000 B.C. or even 4000 B.C.

SECTION II. THE AGE OF THE LATER SAMHITAS.

We have seen that in the age of the Rig Veda, Aryan life and activities were more or less confined to limited areas, *viz.*, the regions of the Punjab, the Indus and the land between the Sarasvati and the Drishadvati. An entirely new picture of Aryan life presents itself in the age immediately succeeding the Rig Vedic period, called the Age of the Later *Samhitas* (collections of books). Our knowledge of Aryan civilisation in this period is based upon the sacred writings of the Aryans other than the Rig Vedic hymns. These writings or collections are variously named according to the nature of their contents as the *Brahmanas, Aranyakas* and *Upanishads.* Besides these, the two great Epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabaratha, though they are later compositions, give us a glimpse of the social and religious condition of the times.

The Later Samhitas

We find that in the new age, the Aryans had gone far to the east and Kurukshetra became the centre of all their activities. The more western regions of the land became comparatively unimportant while populous and spacious states were formed further east. The Aryans

now occupied the whole of the Gangetic plain.

Further Aryan Expansion

These political changes naturally reacted on the social and religious life of the people. With the growth and formation of big kingdoms, there was comparative absence of war, and men thus freed from irksome military duty, turned their attention to other peaceful pursuits. Kings, as a result of conquest, had grown wealthier and were in a position to offer more sacrifices which meant more prayers. Thus hymns to the same old Vedic deities began to increase so rapidly that in order to avoid confusion, the priestly class arranged and classified them into four

The Four Vedas and the Brahmanas

Vedas, *viz*, the Rig Veda, the Sama Veda, the Yajur and the Atharva Vedas.* With this multiplication of the Vedas, prayers and sacrifices also were elaborated and they became 'complex, splendid and costly.' That this complex system of religion might not deteriorate in character and lose its original significance, it became necessary to lay down rules and regulations as to how a hymn was to be chanted and how a prayer was to be uttered. These rules were in prose and were called the Brahmanas. Thus to each Veda there was attached one or more Brahmanas.

It is not that the Brahmanas are books of mere rules and injunctions. They also contain learned disquisi-

Aranyakas and Upanishads

tions on themes such as life and death evolved by sages in dim primeval forests (Aranyakas) whither they had retired to meditate. For this reason they were called Aranyakas. The last portion of the

* The Sama Veda contains 1549 verses. Set to music, they deal with Soma offering. They are addressed either to Soma or Agni. The Yajur Veda concerns itself with the offering of prayers at sacrifices. Part of this written in prose by way of explanation. The Atharva Veda containing 6000 verses is very interesting to students of history as they embody the superstitious beliefs and practices of many tribes, possibly non-Aryan in character. This is perhaps the reason why some Brahmins even to-day do not recognise the Atharva Veda as sufficiently sacred and important to be elevated to the dignity of a true "Veda."

Brahmanas contains the Upanishads (*lit*: secret teachings), which, explaining the inner meaning of the Vedic hymns, lead us on to sublime philosophical speculations concerning the universal soul.

The Epics.

More striking, from the popular point of view, are the two great epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabaratha, which have retained a hold in the mind of the masses such as no epic poetry has done in any age and in any part of the world. Mostly unhistorical and based on the vaguest of traditions the Ramayana is essentially a work of the imagination. Yet it is admired not merely for its diction and purity of style but for the charming story it contains.

The Ramayana

The Ramayana is much older than the Mahabaratha and is the work of one individual, the sage Valmiki. The epic is useful as giving us an account of the life and manners of people living in the early Epic Age about 1000 B. C. Some scholars think that the object of the epic is to glorify the Aryan conquest of South India The Kosalas of Oudh and the Videhas of North Bihar are the nations that play a prominent part in this epic.

The Mahabaratha

The leading incidents of the Mahabaratha cannot, on the other hand, be considered unhistorical. The superstructure of this epic was built on a substratum of fact. The main actors in the Mahabaratha are the Kurus and the Panchalas who lived along the upper course of the Ganges. One of the most memorable episodes in the epic is the 'Bhagavad Gita' or 'the Song Celestial' being a poem recited by Krishna to Arjuna on the battlefield. "The Bhagavad Gita, of which the date is quite uncertain, presents the supreme deity incarnate in the guise of the charioteer Krishna, who expounds the religion of duty, subject to the limitations of the four orders or *varnas* in plain but noble language."

Though valueless as political history, the two epics have continued to profoundly influence Hindu religious thought.

Influence of the Epics

They have furnished high ideals of life and set a standard of morality which it is the pious aspiration of every Hindu to reach. As a learned writer puts it, "for generations Indians have turned in sorrow, in joy and in daily toil to these noble poems for solace and inspiration" In every town and village even to-day, pious throngs gather at nights round street corners or the village common to hear the poems recited and expounded either by the wandering minstrel or the learned Sastri. Verily has Valmiki said with reference to one of the epics,

"As long as mountain ranges stand
And rivers flow upon the earth
So long will this Ramayana
Be told upon the lips of men"—*Macdonell.*

In the epic age there had been a blending of the Aryans with the natives of the soil. As a result big national states were formed. The five leading nations who carved out big principalities for themselves were the Kurus who lived on

Principal nations

the upper courses of the Jumna and the Ganges and whose capital was at Hastinapura; the Panchalas who occupied the extensive tract lower down with Kampilya as their chief city; the Kosalas of Oudh, the Videhas in the east and the Kasis, frequently mentioned in the Mahabharatha whose capital town was the holy Benares.

In regard to political organisation during this period all that can be gathered from the later literature of the Hindus is that kingly power had considerably increased. There was a tendency for the kings to become absolute. But stray references exist to show that sometimes kings were ejected by the people. This indicates that the popular assemblies did not altogether cease to function. The king in the Epic Period surrounded himself with many officers.

These functionaries besides attending to the personal wants of the kings looked after state business as well. Some of these officers are the *Senani* (commander of the army), the *Gramani* (village headman), the *Kshattri* (chamberlain), *Samgrahitri* (charioteer or treasurer), and *Bhagadugha* (collector of taxes). Of these the *Gramani* was 'the channel through which the royal control was exercised and the royal dues received.'

Political Organisation

Great progress was made in this period in the pursuits of agriculture and industry. The plough was improved and a large variety existed in the grains cultivated. With the growth in civilisation the number of occupations also increased. There is no evidence of maritime commerce at this period. Arts and crafts prospered. There was a more extended knowledge of metals, tin, lead and silver being used for various domestic and ornamental purposes. We hear in this period of makers of jewels, of charioteers, of basket and rope makers, of smelters, weavers and of seasoners of food.

Agriculture and Industry

There seems to have been a decline in the position of women during this period. Monogamy which was the general rule in the early Vedic period yielded place to polygamy. The example of kings who married many wives was followed by the nobility. Some scholars hold that female children were exposed to die; but it was not so. It was certainly considered luckier to have a son born rather than a girl. 'A daughter is a source of misery, a son a light in the highest heaven.' Laxity in female morals seems also to be hinted at in some of the later writings of this age.

Social Position of Women

It is in the domain of religion that this period witnesses a remarkable change. Sacrifices and rituals were elaborated and in addition to old gods new ones came into existence.

Thus the worship of Rudra was introduced while Vishnu was struggling hard to find a permanent place in the Hindu Pantheon. Popular heroes were deified and Rama and Krishna were considered *Avatars.* Either to please the mass of the Dravidians in the country or to incorporate them in the Aryan or Hindu fold, the deities of these non-Aryan tribes such as the Naga, the hooded cobra, were worshipped in an Aryan garb. Nor was this age barren in philosophical speculations Some of the Upanishads, for example, clearly and distinctly explain the doctrine of transmigration.

Religion

In fact the period that closes the age of the Brahmanas and ushers in a new epoch characterised by the growth of rival religious faiths is one of great intellectual stir. There was a general expansion of culture. Thus the minute and punctilious observance of sacrifices and the meticulous care with which prayers were offered, gave rise to new sciences. The science of grammar (Vyakarna) arose as a result of the study of Vedic texts. Geometry had its inception in the rules laid down for the construction of sacrificial altars. A study of the movements and positions of stars was rendered necessary as rituals had to be commenced at certain stipulated moments. Thus was great progress made in Astronomy. The slaughter of animals at sacrifices inproved their knowledge of Anatomy though there was deterioration in the physician's skill since the days of the Rig Veda.* All knowledge thus obtained was arranged and systematized into six *Vedangas*, while the duties of each class of people were clearly set forth in the *Dharma Sutras* which also held forth threats of terrible punishments for infringements of duties or deviations from the path of *dharma.*

General Culture

* *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, p. 38.

Caste

The chief feature of the later Aryan polity was the development of caste. Till recently, the word 'caste' was supposed to denote 'varna' or colour. Perhaps the word 'class' better expresses the idea of distinction In this sense in Rig Vedic India there were two classes of people in the land, *viz.*, the ruling class, *i e.*, the Aryans and the subject population, the Dravidians and other aborigines. Soon 'classes' sprang up among the Aryans themselves. When the system of sacrifices and prayers was elaborated, it became necessary to allot the function of Vedic study, interpretation of Vedic texts and the actual performance of sacrifices to a special class who became proficient in it. These were the Brahmins who were proud of the position in society given them and who soon converted their privilege into one of monopoly. Conditions of society favoured the growth of a warrior class also. Warlike kings with a band of noblemen following them and well-skilled in the use of arms acquired a large extent of the land. The acquisition of wealth gave them a pre-eminent position in society and these were the *Rajanyas* and *Kshatriyas.* Those who tilled the land and carried on trade were known as the *Vaisyas* The *Dasyas*, that is the native population, enslaved but not exterminated, became the *Sudras.*

The Four Castes

Originally the distinction between the Brahmans and the Kshatriyas was not so great as it became later on. Thus it was more a division of functions rather than a recognition of two distinct castes. A Kshatriya could become a Brahman ; and Brahmans could fight along with Rajas. But as time went on, the spirit of exclusiveness became dominant and the four classes crystallised themselves into four water-tight compartments. Differences of food and language and even changes in the habitat further split up the members of the same caste or clan into endogamous sects.

Rigour of Caste

Thus the Kosala Brahman would not freely mix with the Magadha Brahman. However the common privilege of all the Brahmans—the privilege to study and interpret the Vedas, the right to conduct Yagas—kept the bonds of union together and even created a common feeling that all of them, notwithstanding differences, were descended from the same Rishis.

Caste Formation

The tendency in later times was for caste to multiply. Various factors operated in thus enhancing the number. Professions, religious beliefs, emigration, changes in custom and in language and inter-breeding have all tended towards the formation of fresh castes and the process is unfortunately going on even to-day.

Demerits of Caste

Much has been stated condemning the caste system. It has destroyed the political and national unity in the country. It has disintegrated society. Professions and occupations have become hereditary. Society is torn asunder by caste disputes and rivalries.

Good Features of the Caste System

There are however two sides to every question. Caste as an institution served its purpose admirably in ancient times. "Caste has been useful in promoting self-sacrifice, in securing subordination of the individual to an organised body, in restraining vice and in preventing pauperism." Economically it enabled every member of the society to perform his duty more efficiently. 'Society was made independent of political changes.'

INDIA
Vedic & Buddhistic Ages.
GANDHARAS
KAMBHOJAS
HIMAVANT
R. Kubha
Taxila
R. Kurram
R. Gomal
PURUS
R. Vitasta
R. Asikni
R. Parushni
BHARATAS
R. Satudri
R. Sarasvati
R. Sindhu
KURUS
Indraprastha
Hastinapura
PANCHALAS
Kampilya
Mathura
SURASENAS
R. Jumna
R. Ganges
Sravasti
SAKYAS
KOSALAS
Kapilavastu
MORIYAS
Pawa
Kusinagara
VIDEHAS
Vaisali
Mithila
R. Kosi
R. Gandak
R. Gogra
LICHHAVIS
R. Brahmaputra
Kosambi
VATSAS
Sarnath
Kasi
KASIS
Pataliputra
Rajagriha
ANGA
MAGADHAS
Buddha Gaya
R. Son
R. Chambal
AVANTI
Ujjayini
Dwaraka
R. Narmada
Barukachha
R. Tapti
KALINGA
Nasik
Paithan
R. Godavari
DAKSHINAPATHA
ANDHRA
R. Krishna
Dhanyakataka
R. Pennar
Kanchi
CHOLA
KONGUDESA
R. Kaveri
KERALA (CHERA)
PANDYA
TAMRAPARNI
OR
SIMHALA DVIPA
65
70
75
80
85
90

CHAPTER IV.

THE EARLY BUDDHIST PERIOD.

SECTION I. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS.

Indo-Aryan Expansion

We have seen in the preceding chapter how the Indo-Arvans had expanded themselves up to the borders of Bengal and how they developed their religious and social institutions. In the early Buddhist period, *i.e.*, 6th and 5th centuries B. C., the political and religious centre of gravity had shifted from the more western to the eastern part of the Hindustan. The kingdom of Magadha became more prominent and not a few of the stirring events of the period were connected with the kings and saints of Magadha. For an account of North India in this period, we are mainly indebted to non-Brahmanical sources, such as the Jain books and Buddhist canonical literature.

Value of the Buddhist Religious Books for the Life of the People

We learn much about the people of this age from the Buddhist books, the *Pitakas* and the *Jatakas*. There were the three Pitakas (baskets), the Sutta, the Vinaya and the Abidhamma. The first consists of the five books of the Nikayas which supply the sources from which early Buddhistic history is mainly derived. The Vinaya Pitaka took about a century to complete and contains the regulations of the Order (of monks, etc.); while the Abidhamma is a classification of the psychological ethics of the Nikayas.

The Three Pitakas

One of the Nikayas has a long episode about the Buddha's life from the time that he became a wanderer down to his attainment of Nirvana; while the *Vinaya* continues the narrative down to the time of the founding of the Order. Another Nikaya gives in detail the story of the last months of Buddha's life. All these canonical books are older than the time of Asoka; they do not mention persons or places in Ceylon or in South India, or any place in the east of India south of Kalinga, and any on the west of India south of the Upper Godavari.

The Jatakas

The *Jatakas* are birth-stories of the Buddha in former lives that he was supposed to have lived. Each separate story is embedded in a framework, generally an account of some incident in the life of the historic Buddha, such as an act of disobedience or folly among the brethren of the Order, the discussion of a question of ethics or an instance of virtue. The Buddha then tells a story of the past, an event in one of his previous births which explains the present incident as a repetition or as a parallel case. In the end a summary is given where the Buddha identifies the different actors in the story in their present births at the time of the discourse. Some of the stories are evidently Buddhistic in their origin; but many are pieces of folk-lore, popular tales which illustrate vividly the ideas, superstitions and customs of primitive times, and they are also "full of interest as giving a vivid picture of the social life and customs of ancient India."*

Their Value and Antiquity

Some of the Jataka legends are found sculptured in the carvings on the stone railings round the *stupas* of Bharhut, Sanchi and Amaravati which are assigned to the third and second centuries B.C.; and even the verse-titles of some of the Jatakas are clearly inscribed over some of the carvings. These prove that the legends were known widely even in the third century B.C. and were even then considered as part of the sacred history of religion. They were probably first composed in Northern India before the time of Asoka, though in their present form they were written in the fifth century A.D.

The Sixth Century—a Period of Great Importance

The sixth century before Christ is an important period in the history of India. It was a period of great intellectual stir. This period witnessed the birth of various monastic orders such as Buddhism and Jainism. The art of writing was widely diffused among men. There was also a great development of maritime commerce. The geographical outlook of the Indo-Aryans and the 'Hinduised' non-Aryans had increased. The great 'Dandakaranya forest' separating the Deccan and Northern India had either been traversed or

* *The Jataka or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*: Translated from the Pali, by Prof. E. B. Cowell and others. Vol. I (1895), Introduction, p. 9.

ceased to be an impediment preventing intercourse between the people of North and South India. Towns and cities gradually grew in number and a beginning was made towards the formation of big empires. It is therefore important that we should study in detail about the social, religious, economic and political conditions of India at this age.

Social Organisation in the Sixth Century B.C.

'The Four Castes'

Society in the early Buddhist Age was organised on the basis of 'caste.' The 'four' castes retained the essential nature of their framework, but there was considerable laxity in the performance of duties allotted to the various castes. Thus the Kshatriyas, other than those who were actually rulers, often tilled the soil and indulged in agricultural pursuits, while the Brahmans indulged in trade. Among the Kshatriyas of this period must be included 'Hinduised' Kolarian and Dravidian chiefs who ruled over petty principalities. A tendency also arose for distinctions to be observed among the members of the same caste. For example, the Magadhan Brahman was considered to be less orthodox and pure than the Kosala Brahman who strictly observed the rules of his caste. Vaisyas who had grown rich as a result of trade were honoured as in days of yore while those of the same caste in humbler walks of life were treated with contempt by rulers. The lot of the Sudras, who formed the bulk of the population and were of non-Aryan descent was miserable enough, but as Buddhism rose to popular favour, the position of the fourth caste began to improve very much.

The Aborigines

Below the Sudras, there were other "low tribes" and "low trades"—*hina-jatiyo* and *hina-sippani*. These were aboriginal tribesmen who followed such mean occupations as bird-catching and killing animals for hides and skins. More despised than these were the Chandalas and

Pukkusas, who ate the carcases of dead animals and were generally of filthy habits.

'The Slaves'

At the bottom of the social scale were the slaves, small in number, and treated not badly at all. It is doubtful whether slavery as an institution was recognised in the period under review. Such slaves who existed in the early Buddhist period were those reduced to such a position either because they could not pay their debts and consequently sold themselves or they were deprived of their freedom as a judicial punishment. In any case they received a much better treatment than that accorded to slaves elsewhere. Most of the Indian slaves were employed as domestic servants.

No Rigours of Caste

Though society was based on the caste system, the various social ranks in it did not feel that system tyrannical or oppressive in its operation as in later times. Caste then did not know its modern rigours The Buddhist books give many instances where people did not lose their caste on account of their occupations. Thus a Kshatriya became a cook or a trader; a Brahman took the post of an assistant to an archer; many Brahmans lived as hunters and trappers. Irregular unions of men and women belonging to various castes were also common.

Economic Condition

Many of the Buddhist books tell us a good deal about the economic condition of India in the period, that is, about the condition of agriculture, and the state of commerce and industry. People in this age lived mainly in villages. There were not many towns in those days—in fact only fifteen of them are mentioned. The most important of the towns were: Savatthi, Champa, Rajagriha, Saketa, Kosambi and Benares. Pataliputra, that great city of the Mauryas, was not yet built. Houses in towns were built of

brick and wood, the walls being plastered and painted in fresco with figures or patterns.

The Village, Centre of Rural Economics

But the village (*grama*), however, was the basis of administration and centre of all activities. A *grama* on an average consisted of 30 families. The affairs of the village were conducted by a headman, elected and paid. Great care was taken about irrigation and it was considered an honour by the villagers to render voluntary labour in constructing works of public utility. 'Women too considered it a civic honour to bear their own part in municipal building.' Rice was the principal crop raised.

Arts and Crafts

Agriculture was the chief source of livelihood. Yet a fair percentage of men lived by arts and crafts of which many were known. If the accounts given in the Jataka stories are to be believed, industry had attained a high level at this time. The main industries of the period were ship-building, cart-making, ivory-work, confectionery, jewellery, architecture, leather-work and painting. In these industries the modern principle of division of labour would seem to have been recognised. As many as 18 professions had organised guilds of their own. Each guild had a president who was generally consulted by the king on all matters concerning finance and taxation. Some industries assumed big dimensions and they were financed by wealthy bankers, *setthis* (*sreshthins*, *i.e.*, headmen). Some enterprises were organized on a co-operative basis also. Merchants and capitalists moved about freely from place to place, while skilled labourers did not hesitate to go to strange lands in quest of work or permanent employment.*

* The Sangham Literature (*cir.* 2nd century A.D.) mentions that the Tamil kings brought to their lands skilled artisans from distant places such as Avanti and Magadha.

6

Trade-routes, Exports and Imports

Benares was in those days the chief centre of commerce and industry. Great trade routes from the north and north-east converging towards it, reached finally Broach from which articles were exported to Babylonia and other places. Paithan in the Nizam's Dominions was also a great emporium frequently visited by caravans. Trading vessels also rounded the coasts of India and Ceylon. Besides these, there were caravan-routes connecting India with Central and Western Asia. The chief commodities of trade from India were silks, muslins, cutlery, armour, perfumes, drugs, ivory-work, jewellery and gold.

Religious Belief in the Sixth Century B.C.

The sixth century B.C. was an epoch-making century in the history of religions in India. It was a period of spiritual revolt and the consequent establishment of new faiths such as Jainism and Buddhism. Before studying in detail about these, let us rapidly review the condition of religion in the 6th century before Christ. We have seen that the simple religion of nature-worship as contained in the Rig Veda gave place to a loftier conception of One Supreme Being who is the Prajapathi or the Lord of Creation. In practice this monotheistic faith, proclaimed in unmistakable terms in the Upanishads, was thickly overlaid with elaborate rituals. The priestly class, when it crystallised itself into a definite caste, multiplied the number of gods whom the people were expected to worship. Thus arose the Indian Trinity, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva; the Supreme God in his three manifestations of Creator, Preserver and Destroyer. Saivism in the course of its evolution absorbed many aboriginal beliefs such as Naga and Linga worship*. As years rolled on, new gods were invented such as Siri or Sirima Devata, the goddess of luck, a very popular deity in the time

* Hoernle: *History of India.*

of the Buddha. There were again the spirits of the earth and the great mountains to be worshipped*. Even the four quarters of the globe had their own guardians. Then came the Nagas and Garudas, symbols of totemistic tribes, elevated to the position of divine satellites of Siva or Vishnu and worshipped by the Brahmans. Practical Hinduism then was covered with such encrustations of animistic superstitions of all sorts and kinds.

Popular Hinduism

Already such a state of things was revolting to the more serious-minded among the Hindus. Some of them, discarding the rituals and pantheistic worship of the priests, had retired to the forest for meditation. To them the end and aim of the Veda was the absorption of the individual soul into the Atman or world soul. Such a realisation came only through knowledge (*gnana*) and not through sacrifices and rituals. 'Accordingly they advised a life of contemplation; for a life of action (*karma*), as it tended to keep a man in a state of ignorance, could not result in his deliverance from misery, but only in a continuous series of re-births, more or less full of misery according as his good or bad actions had preponderated.'† Such noble teachings found favour with the educated section of the society that grew tired of priestly pretensions. The masses also were bewildered at the turn practical Hinduism was taking.

Philosophic Pantheism

Nor was this all. Along with the institution of caste, there developed another institution called the Asramas. According to this, every man should spend his life in four successive stages. The first was that of a *Brahmachari* or a religious student, the second that of a *Grahastha* or house-holder, the third that of *Vana-*

Caste Exclusiveness of the Brahmans

* *Buddhist India*, by Rhys Davids, p. 220.

† Hoernle: *History of India*.

prastha or retirement from active life, and the last that of a *Sanyasin* or a mendicant. This institution was common originally to all the twice-born. But as the Kshatriyas were pre-occupied with wars and formation of kingdoms, the Brahmans alone enjoyed the privilege of entering into all the four stages mentioned. But when piping times of peace came in, the Kshatriyas also desired to be *Vanaprasthas* and *Sanyasins.* Though they possessed the theoretical right to do so, the Brahmans denied the privilege to them which in the end resulted in the formation of monastic orders—Jainism and Buddhism. It has however to be remembered that the Jains and the Buddhists did not protest against the caste system as such, but only against the caste exclusiveness of the Brahmans.

States and Nations

Information about the political condition of North India in the sixth century B.C. is mainly gathered from the religious books of the Jains and the Buddhists. According to these, there were sixteen states in North India between the Himalayas and the Narmada. Of these, four were important, *viz.* :—

(1) Magadha with its capital at Rajagriha.

(2) Kosala with its chief city first at Saketa and next at Savatthi. The Kosalas were a powerful nation and they were at feud with the Magadhas who finally conquered them.

(3) The Vatsa kingdom, to be identified with modern Bundelkhand, with its capital at Kosambi.

(4) The famous Avanti, the country of Malwa, with Ujjayini as its capital.

Chief States

The minor nationalities of which the number is twelve, are mentioned by Rhys Davids thus: The Angas, the Kasis, the Vajjians including the Lichchhavis and the Videhas, the Mallas, the Cetis, or Chedis the Kurus, the Panchalas, the Moriyas, the Surasenas, the Assakas or Aswakas, the Gandharas and the Kambhojas

Some of these states were monarchies, a few of them being of the elective type, while there were also tribal republics. The most important of the republics were the Sakiyas, the Moriyas, the Videhas and the Lichchhavis.

Republican Clans

The monarchical states were ruled by kings generally hereditary; but these were not absolute. The kings sought the advice of the council of ministers who enjoyed large powers. All the ordinances of the king had to be sanctioned by this council. Instances of deposition of kings for misrule and cruelty were not infrequent.

Governmental Organisation

These kings enjoyed certain privileges. They obtained a tithe on raw produce which was in the nature of a yearly tax. They could also dispose of abandoned or forest lands. When a heir was born, kings often took what was termed 'milk-money' from the subjects. On festive occasions they granted pardon to prisoners. Hunting was a favourite pastime of the kings and deer-reserves were maintained by the people for them.

Privileges of Kings

The republican states were administered directly by the citizens in meeting assembled. Such meetings were held in 'mote-halls' resembling the *pandals* of our time. People elected for a definite period of time an executive officer, called a Raja. The Lichchhavis elected two or three such officers.

Administration in Republics

SECTION II. JAINISM AND BUDDHISM.

For a long time it was supposed that Jainism was an offshoot of Buddhism. It has now been definitely proved that Jainism existed long before Gautama Buddha was born. Founded by Parsvanath, a Jaina monk of the 8th century B.C., Jainism was organised as a definite order by Mahavira Vardhamana, the supposed founder of the religion. The Jains worship certain superior beings called Tirthankaras of whom there were twenty-four. Mahavira was the last Tirthankara. He was the son of Siddhartha, the head of a Kshatriya clan and the governing chief of an oligarchic republic at Vaisali. Born in 599 B.C., Mahavira at the age of thirty joined the Order of Parsvanath. Not satisfied with the practices of this order, Mahavira discarded it and wandered for twelve years visiting various cities in the north of India and gathering adherents for the new order he was organising. In the last days of his life he obtained the name of a *Jina* (or *Kevalin*), from which the names Jains and Jainism are derived. He died in 527 B C. in the small town of Pawa in the Patna District.

Mahavira

The Jains like the Buddhists do not care for the Vedas or for the rituals mentioned therein. Jainism has for its object the attainment of *Moksha* or the freedom of the soul from its mundane fetters. The 'Three Jewels' which will help a Jain to reach his goal are Right Faith, Right Knowledge and Right Action. The Jains do not also accept the Vedantic doctrine of a Universal Soul, nor do they conceive of a Supreme Being as the Creator of the Universe. God according to them is the manifestation of all the noblest powers latent in man. They believe that even inanimate objects are endowed with life. 'Ahimsa' or non-injury of living beings is one of the cardinal principles of their life. For this reason the Jains

Principles of Jainism

abstain from all kinds of flesh and "the more rigid of them drink only filtered water, breathe only through a veil and go sweeping the ground before them, for fear of unconsciously swallowing or crushing any invisible animalcule."* The Jains believe in the efficacy of severe penances and one of their stringent vows is the *Sallekhana* which consists in starving oneself slowly to death. Referring to this, Lewis Rice remarks :—"The bitterest satirist of human delusions could hardly depict a scene of sterner irony than the naked summit or the bare rock dotted with emaciated devotees, both men and women, in silent torture awaiting the hour of self imposed death. The irony is complete when we remember that avoidance of the destruction of life in whatever form is a fundamental doctrine of the sect."

Spread of Jainism

After the death of Mahavira, the doctrines of Jainism were spread broadcast by learned followers of the faith, known as *Srutakevalis,* the most famous of whom was Bhadrabahu. This saint who was a contemporary of Chandragupta Maurya led a great migration to the south of India; and thus the Tamil country was brought in touch with Jaina doctrines which in the early centuries of the Christian era found favour with many in that region. The great migration of Bhadrabahu to the south was also the cause of a schism in the Jaina church, which was divided into two sects—the Digambaras and the Svetambaras. The essential difference between the two sects is that while the Digambaras (*i.e*, those who accompanied Bhadrabahu) followed the strict rule of nudity, the Svetambaras felt constrained to clothe themselves. Jainism has an interesting history of its own, of which you will read in the course of this history. Many learned men rose from its ranks and enriched Sanskrit and Prakrit literature by writing many learned books, both religious and secular.

* Barth's *History of Religions in India.*

BUDDHISM.

Like Jainism, the religion of the Buddha also was a result of the Kshatriya protest against the caste exclusiveness of the Brahmans. As we have seen, the early Buddhist age was an era of inquiry which made society eminently discontented. Failure in business and the consequent misery caused brought about a revulsion of feeling against the pursuit of worldly pleasures, and many eminent men of the age belonging to non-Brahmanical castes desired to retire to the forest and end their days in meditation. The Brahmans denying the privilege to the Kshatriyas, a spiritual revolt took place and Buddhism was founded.

Origin of Buddhism

The organiser of this new faith was an younger contemporary of Mahavira, Gautama Buddha. Fortunately we have reliable records to study in detail about the life of this great religious reformer. Gautama Buddha was the son of Suddhodana, the chief of the Sakiya clan, of great name and fame, who had their capital at Kapilavastu in the Nepal Tarai. Being the son of a rich raja, Gautama had every comfort given him. But he cared little for luxury and enjoyment. He was of a philosophic bent of mind and was much worried in regard to the misery he saw all round him. Fearing his monkish predilections, Suddhodana married him to a beautiful princess. But married life had no charm for the Buddha. Shortly after a child was born to him, he resolved to quit home and family life and eventually became a Sanyasin. He went to Brahman ascetics to discover the truth regarding the conquest of misery in life. They advised him to do penance; but the severest austerities he practised had no other effect than to reduce his bodily frame to a skeleton. He then went to Gaya when he was 36 years of age and while sitting in contemplation under a *Pipal* tree, the revelation came to him. After the dawn of the new wisdom, he pro-

Life of the Buddha

ceeded to Benares and there obtained the first recruits to his faith. With the help of these, he continued to preach his religion till his death.*

The Doctrines of Buddhism.

The teachings of the Buddha are simple in nature and so grew to be popular. The Buddha did not concern himself with the question of a Supreme Deity or Its essence. He simply ignored such questions. His object in life was to remove all misery and unhappiness from this world. In the hunt after wealth and worldly pleasure, he saw men suffering both physically and mentally. How to cure this evil was the great problem he boldly faced. He found out the root cause of all the wretchedness existing and that was 'desire.' Annihilation of all desires according to him was sure to remove unhappiness. Death will not, the Buddha said, bring final peace to man because souls are reborn and must therefore pass through another stage of misery. He equally rejected the Brahman solution of the problem, that is, to consider the world as an illusion (Maya) and man as one with God and existing in perfect happiness. Such a position seemed to him to be a mockery. "For whatever he might think about the reality of the world, he could not help feeling the reality of the misery of life." He therefore preached self-denial, contentment and love of others as the surest way to peace or Nirvana.

Moral Precepts

It is a mistake to suppose that Gautama Buddha wanted all men to retire to the forest and lead a life of contemplation. He recognised the need for the layman to pursue his usual avocation in the world, but he laid down special rules for his conduct and a somewhat stricter code for the monks of the Order (Sangha). The following Five Commandments are common to both the sections :—

* 487 B.C. was the date assigned by Dr V. A. Smith for the death of the Buddha. The exact date cannot be fixed with certainty ; a theory pushes back all the dates of the Sisunagas by 50 years and would support the Ceylon date of the Buddha's death, *i. e.*, 544 or 543 B. C.

"Let not one kill any living being;
Let not one take what is not given to him;
Let not one speak falsely;
Let not one drink intoxicating drinks;
Let not one be unchaste."

In fine, the religion of the Buddha is extremely catholic in its tendencies; and its moral precepts are of surpassing beauty. From the beginning thousands embraced it. The Buddhist monasteries scattered all over the country, spread the gospel of the Buddha far and wide. In the time of Asoka, it was the living faith of the masses. This religion, based on the foundations of charity, love and forgiveness, is to-day embraced by more than a third of the human race. How it came to be so, what vicissitudes it had experienced and how finally it almost disappeared from the land of its birth—these and other questions connected with the history of Buddhism belong to another part of this book.

Buddhism: A World-wide Religion

SECTION III. THE RISE OF MAGADHA, B.C. 600 (*cir.*)—B C. 321.

Ancient Magadha corresponds roughly to the modern Patna and Gaya districts of Bihar. Its ancient capital was Girivraja, near Rajgir among the hills of Gaya. It was one of the most important kingdoms in ancient India. Various Imperial dynasties had ruled there from time to time, the Mauryas, the Sungas, the Kanvas and the Guptas. It was, as we have seen, the centre of religious activities; Jainism and Buddhism were originally nurtured in its soil. Here were born many learned men such as Kautilya and Kamandaka, Panini and Patanjali. It was in Magadha that the ancient universities of India, Nalanda and Vikramasila, were founded.

Importance of Magadha

In all probability, men of the Rig Vedic age knew about Magadha. Some scholars hold that the reference in the

Rig Veda to Kikala was indeed an allusion to Magadha. The Aryans of the Vedic age regarded Magadha with great aversion. It was because that country was not Brahmanised at all. Aryan influence slowly permeated however and in the days of the Bharata struggle Magadha had become an Aryan settlement. The earliest dynasty that ruled over Magadha was that founded by Brihadratha, the father of the famous Jarasandha. In all likelihood this dynasty came to an end in the 6th century B.C.

Its Early History

The next dynasty in the Puranic lists is the one of which Sisunaga was the founder. If, as some scholars opine, Sisunaga means Sesh-naga, it follows that the kings of this dynasty belong to the great tribe known as the Nagas who figure largely in the epics.

The Dynasty of the Sisunagas

The founder of the Magadhan imperial power was Bimbisara or Srenika (519 B.C.), the fifth of the line. His capital was at Rajagriha. He was a great statesman and warrior and by his wise policy he paved the way for the imperial greatness of Magadha. Bimbisara entered into matrimonial relationship with the rulers of Kosala and Vaisali. He waged successful war against the neighbouring state of Anga which he annexed. Part of Kasi was brought to him as a dowry by one of his queens, the daughter of the king of Kosala. Mahavira Vardhamana and Gautama Buddha lived in the time of Bimbisara and his Vaisali wife was also related to the former. This powerful king was starved to death by his own son Ajatasatru who afterwards ascended the throne (491 B.C.)*

Bimbisara

If the Buddhist traditions are to be believed, almost the first act of this parricide king was to seek an interview

* The dates of accession of these kings are pushed back to *cir.* 582 and 554 B. C. respectively (*vide* p. 51, V. A. Smith; *Early History of India*, 4th *ed*).

with Gautama Buddha, to confess his sin and obtain absolution from him. We are told that the Buddha, after hearing him, granted his request. This visit of Ajatasatru with his retinue to the Buddha is depicted on a bas-relief in the Stupa of Barhut (probably of the 2nd century B.C.)

Ajatasatru

There seems to be no doubt that this Ajatasatru was a very powerful king who considerably extended the boundaries of his kingdom. His earliest enterprise was a war with Kosala whose king took up the cause of his daughter who had become a widow as a result of Bimbisara's murder. It is not evident that Ajatasatru was successful in this war; but later on peace was patched up and Kosala itself passed on to Ajatasatru. The Lichchhavis of Vaisali also were the enemies of the Magadhan king. Ajatasatru finding it impossible to dislodge the powerful tribes from their place, engaged the services of a Brahman called Vassakara, who by cunning and treachery brought about the downfall of the Vajjians (Lichchhavis). Thus Ajatasatru took possession of their lands and became their master. To keep them in check he built a small fortress on the northern bank of the Son near its junction with the Ganges. This was the beginning of Pataliputra which in the days of the Mauryas became world-famous. Thus the whole region between the Ganges and the Himalayas became subject to Magadha.

Successors of Ajatasatru

The successors of Ajatasatru are mere names. The last of them was Mahanandin, who married a low-caste woman and had a son by her, Maha Padma Nanda, who usurped the throne and began the dynasty of the Nandas.

According to the Puranas, the Sisunaga kings were Kshatriyas, while the first Nanda was known as the Destroyer of all the Kshatriyas (*Sarva Kshatrāntaka*) and also as sole monarch (*Ēkrat*).

Thus he might have overthrown all the dynasties which ruled contemporaneously with the Sisunagas, like the

The Power and Strength of the Nandas

Kalingas, the Ikshvakus, the Surasenas of Muttra, etc. Nanda rule was extended to Kalinga according to the evidence of the famous Hathigumpha Inscription of Kharavela. "The Puranic account of the unification of a considerable portion of India under Nanda's sceptre is corroborated by the classical writers who speak of the most powerful peoples who dwelt beyond the Beas in the time of Alexander as being under one sovereign who had his capital at Palibothra."* Maha Padma Nanda and his sons ruled according to one Purana 88 years; according to another only for 28 years; and but for 22 years according to the Ceylonese chronicles. The first Nanda is supposed to have left not only a big empire, but also a large army and a well-filled treasury, evidence of which is found in the writings of classical writers, Curtius, Diodorus and Plutarch, who say that the king of the Gangaridae in the time of Alexander kept a powerful army which included a very large number of elephants and chariots. The dynasty

The End of the Nandas

was overthrown by Kautilya, the famous minister of Chandragupta Maurya; but no detailed account of the overthrow has come down to us except what is known of Kautilya's *Arthasastra*, and in the *Puranas* and the drama *Mudra Rakshasa* of a later age.

Nanda Power, the Basis of the Mauryan Empire

All this should lead us to infer that just as Alexander's conquests helped the destruction of the petty powers of the Punjab and enabled the unification of the north-west of India under Chandragupta Maurya, so the great power of the Nandas was the precursor of Chandragupta Maurya's power in the east, by paving the union of the north-east of India.

* Hemchandra Ray Chaudhuri: *Political History of Ancient India* (Calcutta, 1923), pp. 118 and 119.

CHAPTER V.

THE PERSIANS IN INDIA—THE INVASION OF ALEXANDER.

SECTION I. PERSIA AND INDIA.

The connection between India and Persia can be traced back to very ancient times. The basin of the Indus had always been in ancient times an Indo-Iranian region common to both the Indians and the people of Irania. The Rig Veda shows the continuity of contact between the two peoples. Learned men say that prior to the Aryan migration into India, the united Aryans (both those who settled in the Punjab and those who settled in Iran) had a common language, a common religion and mythology and common customs. Gradually there arose a schism between those who adhered to the traditions of the past and were inclined to worship the numerous Devas (deified phenomena of nature) and those who professed monotheism, *i.e.*, were believers in the one great God, Ahura Mazda. Thus the two great sects known as the Devas and the Asuras arose, so-called after the deities they worshipped. The Asuras were successful and compelled the Devas to take refuge in the north-east of the Iranian plateau; and from thence they found their way into India.

Connection between India and Persia in Ancient Times

Devas and Asuras

Before the differentiation of the Iranians and the Indo-Aryans began, there was great intercourse between the two peoples. After the differentiation was complete, there still continued the intercourse between them. In fact the trend of discovery for some time past has been strengthening the view that migrations had proceeded

Recent Discoveries at Harappa and Mohenjo Daro—Their Significance

from Mesopotamia and Iran to the Indus basin and the Iranian plateau was a high road of peoples. Recent discoveries of ruined towns made by the Indian Archaeological Department at Harappa in the Punjab and Mohenjo Daro in Sind throw new light upon India's pre-historic past and show a resemblance that the objects like seals which have been discovered bear to those found in ancient ruins in Mesopotamia; and this resemblance would indicate intercourse between north-west India, Persia and Mesopotamia as far back as the third millennium B. C. Again some inscriptions discovered at Boghaz Koi* in Asia Minor show numerals that closely resemble the Sanskrit ones and also that Indra and Varuna, Vedic gods, were worshipped there. These inscriptions are dated about 1400 B.C.; and the evidence gathered from them is that "here we have come across the Aryans on their move towards the east, before they separated into the Persian and Indian branches;" and that probably there might have been earlier waves of race-migration even before this. There are traditions of Western Asian peoples invading India, like the story of the invasion of Queen Semiramis.

Thus we know that even in pre-historic times, the mutual contact of Indians and Persians was close and continuous. The Vedas show the continuity of this contact. The evidence of the Avesta and other Persian sources seems to be much stronger in favour of a large Persian influence on India. From the 7th century B. C. onwards there is definite proof of trade relations between India and Persia and Babylon; and this trade was largely through the Persian Gulf, as well as by land. The Medo-Persian kingdom which was supreme in Western

Definite Mutual Influence between India and Persia from the 7th Century B.C. onwards

* (*Vide supra* Ch. III, Sec I)

Asia in the 6th century B.C. was in close contact with India. Its kings like Cyrus the Great (558-536 B.C.) carried on extensive campaigns in the Eastern Iranian plateau, especially in the regions near the Hindu Kush which verged upon the Indian border-land. Some historians of ancient Greece which was in close contact with Persia say that the people living between the Indus and Kabul were subject to the Assyrians, afterwards to the Medians and Persians.

Persian Rule over the Indus Valley

Darius, a successor of Cyrus and a great conqueror, who reigned from 522 to 486 B.C., ruled over a portion of India which included a part of the Punjab and the Indus valley. There are some inscriptions of Darius in which his conquest of Hindu, *i.e.*, the Punjab territory, is definitely mentioned. India formed one of the provinces (*satrapies*) of the Persian Empire and paid the largest tribute of all the provinces that stretched from the Indus to the Mediterranean. Darius also sent a fleet of boats under one of his naval officers, a Greek of Asia Minor, to explore the course of the Indus down to its mouth and thence to sail along the coast to the head of the Persian Gulf.

The Persian dominion was apparently limited to the Punjab and continued for some generations, a century and more. Darius III, the last of the Achæmenian dynasty, who was overthrown by Alexander the Great, issued a call to his Indian troops who fought under him against the Greek conqueror.

Persian rule in the Western Punjab and Afghanistan contributed to the strengthening of Persian influence. Persian gold coins (known as *darics* as they were first struck by Darius) and silver coins were prevalent in India. Persian scribes introduced a new form of writing into India which was written like modern Persian and Arabic from the right to the left, and not as usually

Strengthening of Persian Influence

from left to right. This alphabet consists of very curved letters and hence is known as Kharoshthi (ass's lip). Persian architects and builders introduced their own styles into Indian buildings which came to be very marked under the Mauryan Emperors like Chandragupta and Asoka, many of whose structures must have been built by Græco-Persian masons. Some are of opinion that the manners of the Mauryan-court were largely Persian ; and one goes sof ar as to say that the dynasty itself was Persian in origin and professed the Zoroastrian-religion.

SECTION II. THE INVASION OF ALEXANDER.

About 350 B C., the Persian Empire became very weak ; many of the provinces asserted their independence ; and the hill-country to the west of the Indus as well as the Punjab was divided into a number of mutually-warring kingdoms and tribes. After Alexander overthrew Darius III and conquered Bactria which lay to the north of the Hindu Kush, he became master of the whole empire of Persia. He founded in modern Southern Afghanistan a city after his own name which is now called Kandahar ; and he prepared in 329 B.C. to cross from thence the mountain barrier which separated him from the Kabul Valley, *i e.*, from the river-system of the Indus itself. He then strengthened his hold on the Hindu Kush and on the difficult mountain region which lay to the north of the Kabul Valley (328-27 B C.) and finally began his march on the Indus. Western Punjab was at that time ruled by two strong kings among others—the Raja of Takshasila (Taxila) which lay three marches beyond the Indus, and the king of the Indo-Aryan tribe of the Pauravas whom the Greeks called Porus and whose kingdom lay between the Jhelum and the Chenab. The king of

Break-up of the Persian Empire—The Invasion of Alexander (329—326 B.C.)

Condition of the Punjab

Taxila was much afraid of his rival Porus and of the hill-chief of Abhisara which lay to the north in the Swat Valley and prudently submitted to the invader even before he crossed the Indus. Alexander reached Taxila early in 326 B.C.; and he was received by its king with all humility and even provided with liberal supplies and elephants. The Raja of Abhisara next submitted and later another chief of the Pauravas whose kingdom lay to the east of the Chenab. But the elder Porus would not submit without a struggle and awaited the invader on the eastern bank of the Jhelum, near a well-known ford. But Alexander stole a passage by a sharp bend in the river farther above and met Porus in a narrow plain where there was no room for the Indian army to move about freely. The huge elephants which formed the principal part of the Indian army proved more a hindrance than a help in the attack against the invincible cavalry of the enemy; while the Indian cavalry and chariots were charged and crushed by the massed Greek cavalry. In the bloody battle which lasted eight hours, all the elephants were either captured or killed, the chariots destroyed and more than 3,000 horsemen and 12,000 foot-soldiers crushed. Porus himself continued fighting bravely to the end and was taken prisoner before Alexander who had the magnanimity to forgive him and reinstate him in his kingdom. (The battle of the Jhelum, July, 326 B.C.).

Battle of the Jhelum

Now there was no power left in the Punjab which could meet the invader openly in battle. Already Abhisara had submitted to him; Alexander advanced to the east of the Chenab near the foot of the hills and then the Ravi near which he defeated an important confederacy of tribes, the Kathaioi*, taking their stronghold called Sangala with the help of the elder Porus who now assisted him with reinforcements.

Further Eastern Advance

* The Kathaioi are equated with Kshatriyas who had a great reputation for courage. Perhaps the term meant the warrior section of the tribes.

When Alexander arrived at the banks of the Beas, his Greek soldiers refused to advance any further; and the invader had to retreat (September 326 B.C.). Twelve huge altars of stone dedicated to the 12 great Greek gods were erected by Alexander to mark the farthest point of his advance into India. After re-crossing the Ravi and the Chenab, Alexander built a flotilla of small boats and started southwards for his voyage down the Indus river-system to the sea. He treated all his Indian conquests as permanent additions to his empire; he appointed Porus to be the king of all the conquered territories between the Jhelum and the Beas which were occupied by seven tribes; and he confirmed the king of Taxila in his possession of the country between the Indus and the Jhelum. The army marched along the two banks of the rivers in two columns, while the fleet slowly sailed down. The powerful tribe of the Malloi and the rude tribe of the Sibci who dwelt above the confluence of the Ravi with the united Jhelum-Chenab, were put down after a strenuous fight and forced to flee to their fastnesses. At last the confluence of the Indus with the united *Panchnad* was reached where a city was founded after the conqueror's name. Going farther down the river, Alexander subdued the Mushikas who lived in Upper Sind and received the submission of the ruler of the Indus Delta which was called Patalene by the Greeks. He advanced to the city of Patala where he wanted to build a naval station. He explored the eastern and western mouths of the river and then reached the open sea. He had already sent one portion of the army by the easy open route through the Mula Pass past modern Kalat to Kandahar. He sent out the fleet under Admiral Nearchus to voyage along the coast to the head of the Persian Gulf; and himself resolved to march with the remainder of the army through the

Retreat from the Beas

Organisation of the Conquered Territories

Passage down the River-system

Return of the Army and of Alexarder

waterless desert of Gedrosia, now known as Makrān, in a direction parallel to the coast. The fleet arrived safely at the Straits of Ormuz and heard that the King himself had after great difficulties and suffering, reached Persia; and the Admiral and Alexander met at the mouth of the Tigris.

The Kingdom of the Prachyas (Easterners.)

When Alexander was in the Punjab, the king of the Prachyas (the Greek Prasioi) who was the powerful Nanda of Pataliputra, was the greatest monarch in Hindustan. It is doubtful whether the Nanda ever heard of the invasion of the Greeks or made any attempt to help the various tribes and chiefs of the Punjab in resisting the invader.

Destruction of Greek Dominion in India

Alexander's rule in the conquered country was supported by an army of Greek mercenaries distributed through the new cities which he planted. But his premature death destroyed his dominion; and within three years after his departure from the delta of the Indus, his officers and garrisons had been destroyed and his colonies blotted out.

Its Significance

The campaign was "in actual effect no more than a brilliantly successful raid on a gigantic scale which left upon India no mark save the horrid scars of bloody war."*

Effects of his Invasion

The only political results of Alexander's invasion were: (1) The sweeping away of the internal barriers of warring tribes and kingdoms which prevented the unification of the Punjab and the consequent paving of the way for an imperial dominion to be established by Chandragupta Maurya on the ruins of these confederacies of free tribes and small chieftaincies, thus facilitating the

* V. A. Smith: *Early History of India*, 4th edition, p. 117. The following oft-quoted stanza of Matthew Arnold may, in one sense,

absorption of the Punjab into the great Mauryan Empire. (2) The establishment of political and other connections between north-west India and the Hellenistic kingdoms of Bactria, Syria and the Eastern Mediterranean, which had broken away as fragments from Alexander's empire; from this political connection there later on flowed cultural contacts, especially the Hellenistic types of art and sculpture associated with the Gandhara School and the Greek system of astronomy which superseded the primitive native system. (3) "The unopposed march of his army from Sind to Persia through Seistan opened up an alternative land-route and solved the problem of easy overland communication with Europe. The circum-navigation of the coast by Nearchus gave Alexander a third line of communication by sea; and if he had lived, there is no reason to suppose that he would have experienced serious difficulty in retaining his hold upon the Punjab and Sind." These routes certainly strengthened trade and other communications. The Indus valley was given by Alexander the chance of becoming a centre of Hellenistic culture as Egypt under the Ptolemies and Syria under the Seleukids came to be.

be regarded as illustrating the attitude of the Indians of those days towards foreign inroads:—

"The East bowed low before the blast
In patient, deep disdain.
She let the legions thunder past
And plunged in thought again."

CHAPTER VI.

THE MAURYAN EMPIRE UNDER CHANDRAGUPTA AND ASOKA—SOCIAL, RELIGIOUS AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF THE AGE.

SECTION I. THE RULE OF CHANDRAGUPTA.

End of Greek Rule: the Rise of Chandragupta Maurya

By September 326 B.C., Alexander had carried his arms as far as the Beas and threatened for a moment to burst upon Madhyadesa. But the Macedonian danger disappeared very quickly, as suddenly as it came. The death of Alexander in June 323 B.C., was followed by the crumbling down of his satrapies and army of occupation in India, mainly due to the re-action of the Indians against the Greeks. By 317 B C., the Greek and Macedonian representatives of Alexander as well as his Indian allies, Porus and Taxiles, had completely disappeared. North-western India threw off, under the leadership of Chandragupta Maurya, the last shreds of the Macedonian yoke. Chandragupta was reputed to be a man of low (non-Kshatriya) origin; he placed himself at the head of the Indian re-action against foreign rule. Some are inclined to regard him as descended from the Maurya clan which was a ruling clan in the early Buddhist period, while one writer has gone so far as to give him a Persian origin.

The Fall of the Nandas

The story goes that Chandragupta visited Alexander in order to induce him to put an end to the tyrannical rule of the Nandas of Magadha, but finding that the Greeks were as great tyrants as the Nandas, resolved to rid the country of both. There are traditional accounts preserved in the Puranas and in the Buddhist and Jain books of the bloody struggle between the Nanda king and Chandragupta.

The Mauryan Period: an Interesting one

With the starting of the Mauryan Empire we come to have a definite chronology.* The outstanding figures of Chandragupta and of the great Asoka, the large empire that they ruled, and the brilliance and volume of literary and other evidence that we have about them, make the Mauryan history a very interesting one.

Chandragupta's Conquests

After the overthrow of the Nandas and the liberation of the Punjab, Chandragupta completed the conquest of Northern India, pushing his dominion as far as Saurashtra (Kathiawar Peninsula) and waging war on Seleukos Nikator, a distinguished general of Alexander, who had taken possession of the whole of Western Asia and started a dynasty ruling from Antioch in Syria. In the struggle (*circa* 303 B.C.), Seleukos who had advanced into India was repulsed and had to secure a safe retreat by the surrender of all the Greek dominions as far as the Kabul valley and a portion of Ariana.

Victory over Seleukos

According to Dr. Smith, the territory ceded by Seleukos to Chandragupta Maurya included the four Satrapies of Ariana (Herat), Arachosia (Kandahar), Gedrosia (Makran) and Paropanisadai (Kabul). Greek writers have recorded a matrimonial alliance between the two monarchs and of a gift of 500 elephants by the Indian king.

* The dates of the Mauryan kings have been placed on a definite footing, first because of the identification of Chandragupta with Sandrokottos, the contemporary of Seleukos Nikator, according to Greek authors. Besides this synchronism (*i.e.*, showing that king A of unknown date was the contemporary of king B of known date), there is another synchronism of Chandragupta's grandson, Asoka, with Antiochos Theos, the grandson of Seleukos. These two have been greatly helpful in the construction of the Mauryan chronology.

His Probable Conquest of the Deccan

Besides the conquest of all Northern India and of the regions beyond the Indus, we are told that in some Tamil literary works of the Sangam Age, there are evidences of a Mauryan invasion of even the Tamil country from the Konkan along the west coast proceeding through the Kaveri Valley to the distant Podiyil Hills in Tinnevelly.* This, taken along with the evidence of certain Mysore inscriptions referring to Chandragupta's rule in North Mysore, might mean that a fairly large portion of Trans-Vindhyan India was actually conquered by the first Maurya. Chandragupta maintained friendfy relations with the Greek powers and received from Seleukos an ambassador, Megasthenes, who resided for some years at the Mauryan court.

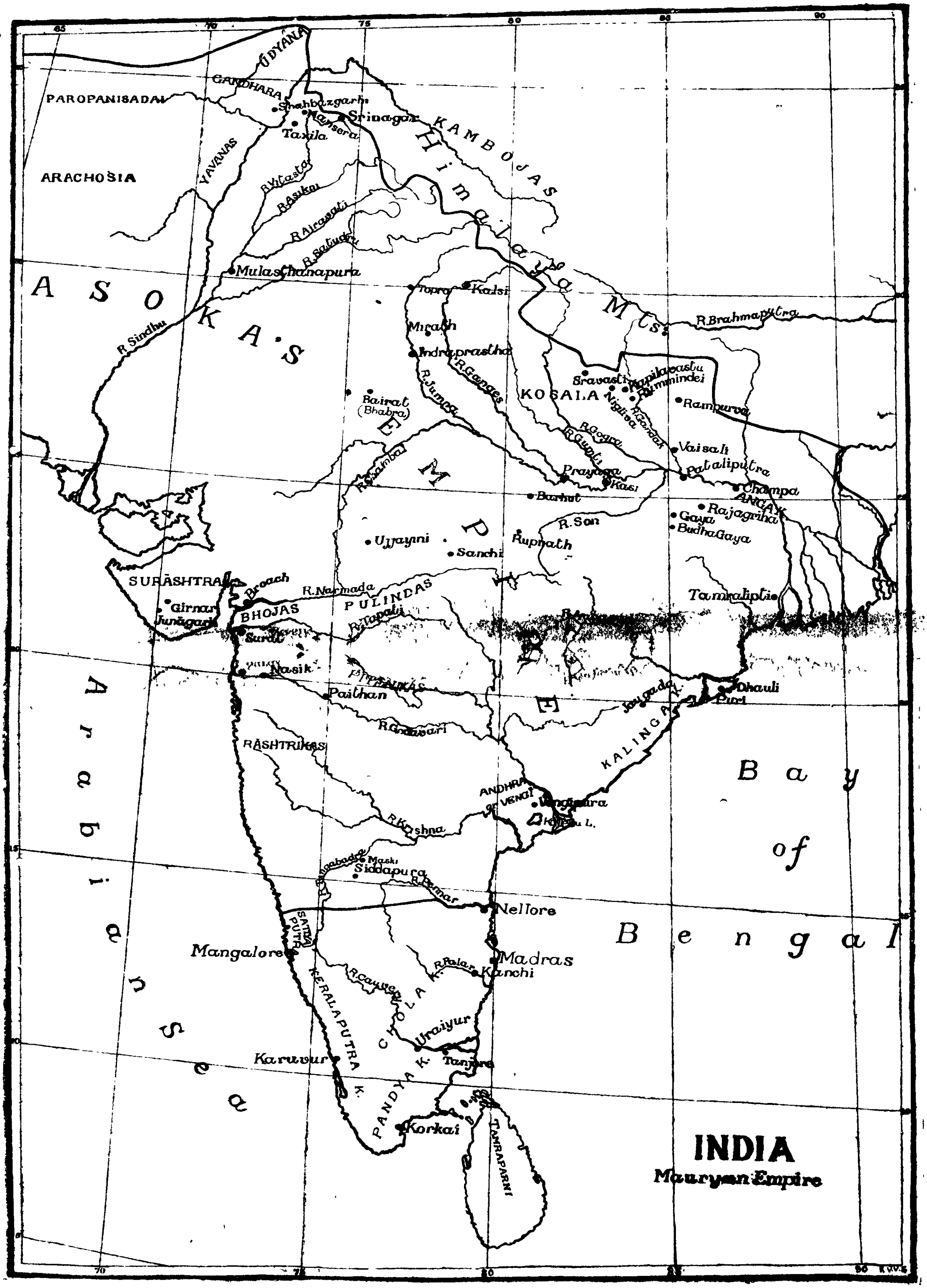
Megasthenes: the Value of his Account of India

This ambassador wrote an account of Indian affairs, and though his work as a whole has been lost, it survives in the shape of fragments in quotations by later Greek writers. "Megasthenes possessed very little critical judgment, and was, therefore, often misled by wrong information received from others. But he is a truthful witness concerning matters which came under his personal observation." His detailed description of Pataliputra, the capital of the Empire, has come down to us, as well as the account of the Mauryan system of government and the etiquette and organisation of the Imperial Court. The main features of this Greek account are supplemented by

The Artha Sastra of Kautiiya

the *Artha Sastra* (Art of Government) of Kautilya, also known as Chanakya or Vishnugupta, the Brahman minister and the chief support of the Emperor. It expounds "the principles of state-craft current in his

* For details concerning this important episode in Mauryan history, consult Chapter II of the *Beginnings of South Indian History*, by Dr. S. K. Aiyangar.


PAROPANISADAI
ARACHOSIA
GANDHARA
UDYANA
YAVANAS
Taxila
Srinagar
KAMBOJAS
Himalaya Mts.
Mulasthanapura
ASOKA'S EMPIRE
R. Sindhu
Kalsi
Indraprastha
R. Ganges
R. Jumna
Bairat
(Bhabra)
KOSALA
Sravasti
Rummindei
Rampurva
R. Brahmaputra
Vaisali
Pataliputra
Prayaga
Kasi
Barhut
R. Son
Champa
ANGA
Rajagriha
Gaya
BudhaGaya
Ujjayni
Sanchi
Rupnath
SURASHTRA
Girnar
Junagarh
Broach
R. Narmada
PULINDAS
BHOJAS
R. Tapati
Surat
Nasik
Paithan
R. Godavari
Tamralipti
Dhauli
Puri
Jaugada
KALINGA
RASHTRIKAS
ANDHRA
or VENGI
R. Krishna
Maski
Siddapura
R. Pennar
Nellore
SATIYA PUTRA
Mangalore
Madras
R. Palar
Kanchi
KERALAPUTRA K.
CHOLA K.
Uraiyur
Karuvur
Tanjore
PANDYA K.
Korkai
TAMRAPARNI
Arabian Sea
Bay of Bengal
INDIA
Mauryan Empire

(Kautilya's) age, which must have guided his successful policy. The treatise may be read from one point of view, as a commentary on and exposition of the notes recorded by the Greek observers."*

The End of Chandragupta's Rule

According to Jain tradition, Chandragupta was a Jain; and when a severe and prolonged famine occurred in Northern India, he abdicated, turned an ascetic and migrated to the tableland of Mysore along with Bhadrabahu, the high priest of the Jains. There he is supposed to have lived for some years and ultimately died by starving himself to death—one of the recognised Jain methods of ending life. Chandragupta is supposed to have ended his rule about 298 B.C. and been succeeded by his son Bindusara who reigned for 25 years according to the Puranas. He continued to maintain friendly relations with the Greek powers of Egypt and Syria. The latter state which was ruled by Antiochos Soter in succession to Seleukos, continued to maintain an ambassador at the Indian court, in succession to Megasthenes. Not much is known about the government or conquests of Bindusara. He kept intact his father's empire and possibly extended it in the Deccan. He died according to Dr. Smith about 273 B. C and was succeeded by his great son, Asoka.

Bindusara 298—273 B.C.

* *Early History of India*, 4th edition, by V. A. Smith, revised by S. M. Edwardes, p. 144. Refer also to J. F. Fleet's Introduction to the English translation of the book, by Dr. R. Shama Sastry (Mysore, 1915.)

SECTION II. ASOKA MAURYA.

Asoka's Accession

All of us know of Asoka the Pious, and of the great good that he did to the people and of the reverence with which his name is cherished. A large mass of legends has grown round his figure; and the *Dipavamsa*, a Buddhist Pali book of Ceylon written in the 4th century A.D., is particularly detailed in this matter. We are told how Asoka was very wicked at first and ascended his father's throne wading through the blood of his slain brothers. But these stories have been proved to be false and seem to have been invented by the Buddhist monkish writers "chiefly in order to place a dark background of early wickedness behind the bright picture of his mature piety." His accession and rule seem to have been peaceful except for a probable contest with a brother which is mentioned in the Indian version of the legends.

The Chronology of the Reign

According to the latest calculations, Asoka should have come to the throne before 273 B.C. His coronation, however, took place only 3 or 4 years after his accession.* His reign lasted 36 or 37 years according to Brahman and Buddhist books. The Ceylonese Buddhist books say that his coronation took place 218 years after (*i.e.*, in the 219th year of) the death of the Buddha—a fact which is of value for the determination, rather of the

* K. P. Jayaswal—In the *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society* (1917).—The provisional chronological scheme of the reign is given in the *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, p. 503, on the basis that 258-57 B.C. is the provisional date of the 13th Rock Edict which mentions five contemporary Greek rulers of the Eastern Mediterranean and that this edict could be assigned to the 14th year of the reign. Thus 274 B.C. would be the date of accession; 270 B.C. that of coronation; 262-61 B.C. that of the conquest of Kalinga; 258-57 B.C. that of the issue of the 14 Rock Edicts; 253 B.C. (?) that of the convening of the Buddhist Church Council; and 237-36 B.C. (?) that of the death of Asoka.

date of the Buddha than that of Asoka. "For eight years from his coronation he carried on the traditional Maurya policy of expansion within India and of friendly co-operation with foreign powers." He had possibly to suppress a revolt in Taxila before he made war on Kalinga (the present-day Orissa and Ganjam). Kalinga was, under the Nandas, part of the Magadhan dominions; it should have fallen away in the interval.

The Conquest of Kalinga

The struggle was bloody; and the land was constituted a separate viceroyalty under a prince of the royal family with his capital at Tosali. The Emperor issued two special edicts declaring the principles on which the people of Kalinga and the uncivilised tribes on its border should be treated. These two edicts were engraved on rock at two sites, Dhauli (Tosali ?) in Orissa and Jaugada in Ganjam.

It Marks a New Era in Imperialism

The conquest of Kalinga marks the close of the epoch of aggression on the part of Magadha which was ushered in by Bimbisara's subjugation of Anga. It also marks "a new era of peace, of social progress, of religious propaganda and at the same time of political stagnation and perhaps of military inefficiency during which the martial spirit of Imperial Magadha was dying out for want of exercise."*

The Propagation of Dhamma (Dharma)

After this Asoka came definitely under the influence of Buddhist teaching, began to detest the bloodshed of the late war and declared that the chiefest conquest was the conquest of the Law of Piety (*Dhamma*, Sans. *Dharma*). "The reverberation of the war-drums (*berigosha*) had become the reverberation of the Law (*Dharmagosha*)." The Emperor no longer coveted the

* H. C. Ray Chaudhuri: *Political History of Ancient India*, p. 161.

territories of his neighbours, gave them advice on occasions and sent to them envoys and Buddhist missionaries, so that they might also be converted to the Buddhist Dharma.* Asoka detested the slaughter of animals at sacrifices indulged in by the orthodox Brahmans and Deva-worshippers as well as the *samajas* or popular festivals which were accompanied by drinking bouts and animal fights. He laboured hard to improve the moral condition of the people, effected administrative reforms, arranged for the preaching and dissemination of Dharma by officials and engaged in measures of philanthropy and benevolence. He undertook tours of pilgrimage to the holy places of Buddhism of which the records of two are preserved. He created new officials known as Dharma Mahamatras and Dharma Yuktas to do propaganda work, prevent injustice and control the alms-giving department of government and generally promote the welfare of the people. He prohibited the slaughter of animals in sacrifices and the killing of creatures to make *curries* in the Imperial kitchen. He abolished the royal hunt which was a principal amusement of kings and seriously restricted animal slaughter by the people for food purposes.

Moral and Social Improvement of the People

* He maintained friendly relations with the Tamil kingdoms of the South (Chola, Pandya, Keralaputra, Satiyaputra) and also Tambapanni (Ceylon) to which he sent a Buddhist mission. He also sent missions to Antiochos of Syria (B.C. 261—246), Ptolemy II of Egypt (B.C. 285—247), Magas of Cyrene in North Africa (d. 258 B.C.), Antigonus of Macedonia (B.C. 277—239) and the king of Epiros. According to tradition he sent missionaries to Pegu (Swarnabhumi) and his name is connected with the beginning of Buddhist culture in Ancient Khotan. Buddhist teaching was carried also to the border tribes living on the Himalayas, the Gandharas and the Yavanas of the Kabul valley and the tribes like the Bhojas, the Pulindas and others living in the regions of the Vindhya range and in the Western Ghats.

For the benefit of way-farers and others, he dug wells and planted trees along the roads and provided for hospitals and the free supply of medicinal herbs and drugs for both men and animals. He taught that all men should lead simple and truthful lives, honour parents, elders and ascetics and also show charity and sympathy to all. He was himself tolerant of all sects, urged his subjects (as in Rock Edict XII) not to speak evil of their neighbours' faiths and reverenced and patronised religious men of all creeds. He even dedicated some caves, which he excavated in the Barabar Hills near Gaya for the use of the Ajivika ascetics who were more akin to the Jainas than to the Buddhists. He tried to secure concord among the various creeds and eagerly attempted to prevent schism within the Buddhist Church itself.* It was also with this object that he convened a General Church Council of Buddhism in the 18th year of his coronation, which carefully defined the canon and was a landmark in the history of the growth of Buddhism. By all these measures he succeeded in transforming Buddhism which was a local Indian sect into one of the great religions of the world.

Humanitarian Measures etc.

Asoka's Religious Tolerance—Attitude to Buddhism

According to Hindu ideas the duty of the ruler is to uphold the Dharma and the virtue of his subjects. Asoka gave a new force and energy to this idea. He urged the moral improvement of the people not only as their

Asoka and Dharma

* In the Bhabru Edict (an epigraph discovered in the ruins of a hill-monastery at Bairat in Rajputana) there is a message from Asoka to the Buddhist Sangha containing certain canonical texts to which he enjoins attention. A *sasana* (order) of Asoka found engraved on three pillars at Sarnath, Sanchi and Kausambi is regarded as an attempt at putting down schism and preventing disruption. According to the Ceylonese Chronicles (Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa) Buddhism was split up in Asoka's days into two main divisions and several sub-sections.

paternal ruler, but also as an energetic philanthropist. Though admittedly a Buddhist, he was no sectarian. He did not concern himself with theological doctrines and rituals. "He was fascinated not by any specification of rules and regulations to be observed externally and mechanically, but rather by what constitutes and conduces to inner real growth."* His tours gave him opportunities of personal intercourse with the people; and he issued proclamations which were published by his officials and inscribed on rocks and pillars.† These inscriptions form a very valuable source of information for the personality and character of Asoka as well as for the details of his government and ethical system.

The Unique Value of his Inscriptions

* D. R. Bhandarkar: *Asoka* (Calcutta, 1925), p. 88.

† *These inscriptions* fall into the following classes:—

(1) *The Fourteen Rock Edicts* found in seven different localities scattered from the Peshawar District to Ganjam, contain an account of Asoka's principles of government and ethical system. Each edict is devoted to a certain subject. The places at which these edicts are found are Shahbazgarhi in the Peshawar District, Mansera also in the neighbourhood, Kalsi in the Himalayas near Mussoorie, Girnar in Kathiawar, Sopara in the Thana District to the north of Bombay, and Dhauli in Orissa and Jaugada in Ganjam. All these are rock inscriptions and in some, not all the edicts, have been discovered. The find-places of these are in the frontier provinces of the Empire.

(2) *The Two Kalinga Edicts* already noted which take the place of Edicts XII and XIII of the ordinary series at Jaugada and Dhauli.

(3) *The Minor Rock Edicts* of which Edict I is found in seven places from Bihar and the Central Provinces down to Chitaldrug District in Mysore; and the II Edict giving a summary of Asoka's Dharma is found along with the 1st in three places in Mysore. A mutilated copy of these was recently discovered at Maski in the Nizam's Dominions.

(4) *Three Cave Inscriptions* at the Barabar Hills near Gaya already noted.

(5) *The Bhabru Edict* also noted above.

The Emperor's moral achievements were greater than his material ones. These and his ideals are best known from his inscriptions on rock and pillar, supposed by some to have been suggested by a foreign precedent, *viz.*, the inscriptions of the Persian Darius. Asoka's relations with the Buddhist Church were friendly and cordial; but he was not a slave to it. He exhorted the people to practise simple virtues; these admonitions occur in all the edicts from the earliest to the latest. Asoka regarded conduct as something more than morality; and this is the effect of an acute sense of the responsibility of personal rule.

(6) *The Seven Pillar Edicts* issued in their complete form about the year 242 B.C. may be regarded as an appendix to the Fourteen Rock Edicts as they reiterate and emphasize Asoka's principles of government and ethics. These edicts are found inscribed on six pillars (two of them are now found at Delhi, said to have been brought there by Firuz Tughlaq, Sultan of Delhi, in the 14th century); one pillar at Allahabad which was originally at Kausambi; and the remaining three on pillars in the Champaran District of N. Bihar. Only one of the Delhi pillars has got all the seven edicts. The other pillars contain six edicts only. The Champaran Pillars were possibly planted along the road from the capital to the Nepal valley.

(7) *The Minor Pillar Edicts.* The Asoka Pillar at Allahabad contains two Minor Edicts, one of them punishing schismatics in the Buddhist Church. This edict alone without the other was engraved on the broken pillar at Sanchi and also on the pillar at Sarnath A pillar at Rummindei (the birth-place of the Buddha) in the Nepal Terai has got a commemorative record on it from which we know that it was the birth-place of the Buddha. There is another pillar near by which has also got a commemorative record on it.

These inscriptions were thus inscribed on rock, stone pillar and stone slab. The Fourteen Rock Edicts and the Seven Pillar Edicts were called *Dhammalipis.* Pillar Edicts I—VI were engraved in th 26th year of the reign. Pillar Edict VII was engraved one year later. Different dates are found mentioned for the different Rock Edicts which could not have been engraved before the 13th regnal year and which according to Dr. Bhandarkar were engraved after the Pillar Edicts. The script of these edicts is either Kharoshthi or Devanagari.

Asoka's Monuments

Legend ascribes to Asoka the building of an enormous number of stūpas* as well as a huge palace at Pataliputra which was the wonder of Fa-Hien, the Chinese traveller, who came to India in the beginning of the 5th century A.D. Besides he excavated caves and planted numerous monolithic pillars which are a triumph of engineering and architectural skill and usually surmounted at the top by an abacus and the figure of a lion or bull or four lions placed back to back. The remains of the palace recently dug out at Pataliputra are ascribed to him. He completed the building of the dam of the Sudarsana Lake in Kathiawar which was begun in Chandragupta's time. Srinagar in Kashmir and Lalita Patan in Nepal are attributed to him. His pillars and stupas are seen even to this day.

His Titles

In only one of his inscriptions, *viz.*, at Maski, is Asoka called by his own name. Elsewhere he is called Raja and also by his official titles, *Devanam Priya* (beloved of the gods) and *Priya Darsana* (gracious of mien).

The Extent of the Empire

The Empire remained intact under him. An idea of its extent can be gathered from the location of his inscriptions extending from Peshawar to Orissa and Mysore; while Kashmir and Nepal were integral parts of his dominions. The Fourteen Rock Edicts seem to have been engraved in the capitals of the outlying provinces; and the Minor Rock Edicts at places which separated his actual dominions from those of his independent or semi-independent neighbours. The empire included the whole of India except the southern extremity marked

* A *stupa* contained the relics of a saint or marked some famous event in Buddhist history. It was usually a solid hemispherical mass of masonry at the top of which there was an altar surmounted by stone umbrellas. The base was surrounded by a carved stone-railing usually enclosing a perambulating path.

by a line drawn from Pulicat near Madras to Chitaldrug in Mysore; it also embraced those dominions beyond Gandhara which had come under the sway of Chandragupta. The government of such a large empire was necessarily multi-central, split up into a number of provincial governorships and viceroyalties. The bigger viceroys were princes of the royal family; and the edicts mention four such as ruling at Taxila, Ujjayini, Tosali and Suvarnagiri (in the Deccan). These were called *Kumaras* and *Aryaputras*. The smaller districts were under *Rajukas* assisted by *Pradesikas* and controlled by inspectors or spies sent out by the king. The heads of departments were called *Mukhas* and *Mahamatras* who were also in charge of cities. Asoka created a new department of Dharma as already seen, and assigned specific functions to the Dharma-Mahamatras. We also hear in the edicts of religious cesses and of land-revenue which amounted to one-eighth of the produce. The edicts give details of the border peoples on the north-west and on the south and of independent realms beyond including those countries of the distant west to which Asoka despatched missionaries.

Its Organisation

Asoka's place in history is a great one, though it can not be easily estimated aright. His special characteristic claim to fame, *viz.*, that he laboured unceasingly for the moral and material good of his people, was supplemented by his greatness in other respects. In the history of Buddhism he is second only to the founder himself. The only other Indian ruler who is fit to be ranked with him is the great Akbar. His missionary efforts helped in the Aryanising of the remote parts of the country and greatly stimulated the development of commerce and art. But greater than all these services was "the goal of cosmopolitanism that he placed before the world, the brotherhood not merely of the human, but of the living being."

Asoka's Place in History

SECTION III. SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS CONDITIONS UNDER THE EARLY MAURYANS.

The People and the Land.

The Land

We may distinguish as regards land, forests, pastures and cultivated areas. The forest regions comprised inaccessible tracts inhabited by wild tribes, the areas which were utilised by hunters and trappers or reserved for elephant grounds and state hunting grounds. The pastures included lands occupied by ranchers whose head-quarters were other stations. The villages had definite boundaries and each had its own assembly and internal economy. There were also royal domains set apart for the use of the king. But apart from this the ultimate property in the land was regarded as vested in him. "He was entitled to the land-revenue and in default could replace the cultivator in his holding." He encouraged the cultivation of new or abandoned tracts. Officials and ranchers were assigned revenues of villages and a portion of the stock respectively.

The King was the Ultimate Owner of the Land

Roads, Towns, etc.

We hear of roads and couriers traversing them. Towns were numerous and ranged from the small market town (*Samgrahana*) to the city (*Nagara*) and the port (*Pattana*). Besides there were forts at strategic places also. The art of fortification was fairly elaborated, as seen from the description of Pataliputra by Megasthenes.

Classes of the People

The Greek ambassador notes seven principal classes of the population—philosophers who included Brahmans and ascetics, cultivators, herdsmen and hunters, traders and artisans, the fighting class, etc. These corresponded only partially to existing caste divisions; and Megasthenes speaks of government officials

and inspectors as forming a separate class. The crafts of artisans and labourers were numerous, particularly those who worked in precious metals and in fabrics. The learned professions included the doctor, the singer, the dancer, the rhapsodist (minstrel) and the soothsayer. As in the previous epoch, there were trade-guilds and the heads of guilds and rich merchants were known as *Sreshthins* or *Seths*.

Trade

Trade was active; markets were numerous; duties were levied on goods at the frontiers, on roads and at the gate-ways of towns. The prices were publicly declared; and combinations of dealers to increase prices were punished. Prices, weights and measures were all regulated by government. The king himself traded on a large scale; "he reserved the right of coining and other work in silver and gold which was executed by his officials on behalf of those who brought their raw metal."*

Castes and Gilds

In this period, we see the caste system growing more complex than before and also the beginning of occupational and craft-castes. Inter-marriage between different castes was still allowed in a large number of cases. The bulk of the people lived a simple life and were frugal in their diet and dress. But we also hear of luxurious dresses, gaming and festive-houses, inns, hostelries, eating-houses, etc. Each craft gild had its officials and organisation and indulged in public dinners. Widows were generally allowed to marry. The joint-family system largely prevailed. The poor and the helpless, the families of soldiers wounded or killed and of workmen dying during their employment were taken care of by the king. Slavery was prevalent and slaves were mainly recruited from criminals and captives in war.

* *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, p. 479.

Writing

Writing was in common use. The bulk of the people could read and write as is evidenced from Asoka's public edicts. Sanskrit was the language of the Brahmans and learned men. There was a large amount of folk-poetry in the vernacular which was also employed in administration. Buddhist and Jain books were in the vernacular. In fact Pali which afterwards became the sacred language of Buddhism was originally a vernacular.

Gods Worshipped

Siva and Vishnu were the most popular Brahman deities. Associated with Siva was Skanda or Visakha, the god of war. In Buddhist books we often hear of Brahma and Indra. Jainism was mostly confined to Bihar and the neighbourhood of Ujjayini; but Buddhism became widely prevalent under Asoka.

Nature of the Administration

The *Grama* was autonomous under its headman, known as the *Gramani* A group of villages was under a *Gopa*; while the *Rajuka* formed the highest local official according to the edicts of Asoka. There were ministers and Mahamatras besides governors and viceroys. In fact "the Mauryan Empire with its vast array of officials and spies introduced a bureaucratic rule in the place of the old quasi-feudal system." Foreign influences and customs, mostly borrowed from Persia, were supposed largely to have been prevalent at the Mauryan court.

Revenue and Expenditure

The revenue of the king was composed mainly of land-tax and special irrigation dues, customs and tolls on goods, profits of coinage, license-fees paid by artisans, traders and gaming houses and lastly fines imposed as judicial penalty. There were various other sources of income also like benevolences extracted from the well-to-do people. The army and the bureaucracy of officials were the main objects of expenditure, besides the

construction of public works like roads, irrigation channels, etc., and the maintenance of orphans. Census registers were maintained both of property and of the people, as well as of births and deaths. This feature was noted by Megasthenes and stressed by Kautilya. The central government was divided into departments of which the revenue and the military were the chief. Asoka instituted a special department of religious charities and almsgiving. The king was assisted by an inner cabinet of ministers, protected by a numerous body-guard and kept a splendid and extravagant court.

Other Features of Government

Smaller cities were under the control of mayors (*nagarakas*). In larger cities municipal duties were discharged by panchayats, while in Pataliputra, Megasthenes speaks of six such panchayats which supervised factories, took care of strangers, hospitals and public buildings, took a census of births, deaths, controlled markets, weights and measures, inspected manufactures and licensed traders. He also notes that the military department was under the control of a board of 30 members similarly divided into six panchayats which controlled respectively admiralty matters, transport, chariots, elephants, cavalry and infantry. The standing army of the Mauryas was large, well-paid and efficient. Soldiers were recruited from feudal levies, mercenaries, forest tribes and the militias of the gilds.

Cities

The Army

The *Artha Sastra* corroborates a great deal of the information detailed above; besides it refers to the duties of the king as guardian of the social order and as the jealous protector of the state. In order to encompass his ends, the king should have recourse to all means, even treachery and over-reaching. The state contemplated as the normal one in the *Artha Sastra*, was of moderate size. With the rise of great empires like that of the Mauryas, *uparajas* and viceroys had to come in. Kautilya, the author of *Artha Sastra*, is renowned not only as king-maker and empire-maker, but also as one of the greatest of the Indian exponents of the art of government.

The Artha Sastra

CHAPTER VII.

THE POST-MAURYAN PERIOD.

SECTION I. THE LATER MAURYAS, SUNGAS, KANVAS AND THE ANDHRAS.

The Empire Shrinks

We have seen that the Empire of Asoka extended from the Hindu Kush to the borders of the Tamil country. But with his death, disintegrating tendencies set in. The outlying provinces gradually asserted their independence, while foreign nations poured through the north-western gates of the Empire which continued rapidly to shrivel. A quarter of a century after the death of Asoka, a plot was easily hatched up and the last of the Mauryas was murdered and a new dynasty was set up.

Obscure History of the Later Mauryas

The details concerning the history of the later Mauryas are obscure. Conflicting accounts are given in the Puranas in regard to the successors of Asoka. The following facts may however be taken as representing in the main the course of events after the great Emperor's death.

The Later Mauryas

The death of Asoka was a signal for a general revolt even on the part of the members of the royal family. One of his sons, Jalauka, took possession of Kashmir and became independent. The rest of the Empire was perhaps divided into two portions, the eastern and the western, governed respectively by the two grandsons of Asoka, Dasaratha and Samprathi. The former who governed the eastern provinces of Magadha and the outlying areas was not such a great patron of Buddhism that his grand-father was. On the other hand, he would appear, judged by the name of his consort, Isanadevi, a worshipper of Siva.

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The Later Mauryas

Samprathi, the ruler of the western provinces with Ujjayini as its capital, has been claimed by the Jains as a great patron of their religion. We are here concerned with the main line of kings who ruled in Magadha. According to the *Vishnu Purana*, Dasaratha was succeeded by kings who were mere names. The last of them, Brihadratha, was assassinated by his commander-in-chief, Pushyamitra Sunga who thus established a new line known as the Sunga Dynasty (185 B C.). After this event, the Mauryas disappeared as an imperial power. Petty Mauryan chiefs, however, continued to rule both in Magadha and Western India for a long time.

Causes for the Decay of Mauryan Power

We shall now examine the causes that brought about the decomposition of the Mauryan Empire. Some of them are to be found in the policy pursued by Asoka himself. Asoka never cared for the practice of arms and consequently there was little military ardour found among the people. The army was neglected after the Kalinga war. A big empire such as that which the predecessors of Asoka had built up, should rest not merely on sound and benevolent principles of government but also on the strength of the sword. Asoka's policy of investing local rajas with almost independent powers was extremely fatal to the political stability of the Empire. The presence of half-conquered nations within the Empire such as the Kalingas and the Andhras was another sources of weakness. With the expansion of the Empire more and more towards the south and north-west, a more centrally situated capital was necessary. The administration of distant provinces by the officers of Asoka was particularly oppressive and even during his time edicts had to be issued ordering the officials to be merciful towards the people. Some of these provincials had actually revolted in the time of Bindusara and

Asoka's Responsibility

Asoka. The latter's lack of control over the higher officers must have exasperated the people who were glad to get rid of the Mauryas.

Other Contributory Causes

Some scholars think that the essentially Buddhist policy of government pursued by Asoka, notwithstanding his toleration, had embittered the feelings of the Brahmans who feared that their religion was in danger and besides should have lost many of their former privileges. This led to a great reaction against Mauryan ascendency which was promoted for some time in secret by the Brahmans and culminated in open revolution in the time of the later Mauryas.

The Final Blow

Other causes which hastened the downfall of the Mauryan line were the weakness and ineptitude of the successors of Asoka, the loss of northern provinces and the invasion of the north-west India by the Bactrian Greeks. The Empire thus lay prostrate when Pushyamitra Sunga gave the final blow to it.

The Sunga Empire (184 B.C. to 72 B.C.)

Origin of the Sungas

Pushyamitra belonged to the Sunga family whose origin is not clear. Some consider the Sungas to be Iranians. Others think that they were Brahmans. The famous grammarian, Panini, 'connects the Sungas with the well-known Brahman family of Bharadvajas.' If so, we must account for the rise to political power of this Brahman family. Instances where the Brahmans exchanged the book for the sword are often met with in history. The Kadambas of the Deccan, for example, who were of Brahman descent, were forced by circumstances to become rulers.

The dominions of Pushyamitra extended as far as the Narmada in the south. Perhaps they included also all the territories in the Gangetic valley. His jurisdiction did not extend to the Punjab. According to a Sanskrit play, *Malavikagnimitra* (attributed to Kalidasa), his son, the Crown Prince Agnimitra, was ruling at Vidisa (Bhilsa in the present Bhopal State in Central India). The chief events of Pushyamitra's reign are (1) the invasion of the Greek-Menander; and (2) the invasion of Magadha by Kharavela of Kalinga.

Extent of Sunga Dominions

From the beginning of the second century B.C., the *north-west frontier* of *India had been held by the Greeks* of Bactria, of whom we shall study in detail in the next chapter. In the time of Pushyamitra Sunga, a Greek prince by name Menander* invaded India in imitation of to Alexander the Great. He was so far successful as to hold the Indus valley and the East Punjab, then plunged into the interior, took Mathura on the Jumna, invested Saketam (in Oudh), besieged Madhyamika in Rajaputana and threatened to attack the capital of the Empire itself. Pushyamitra emerged successful in the contest and the Greeks were driven out. The facts of this invasion have been attested for in the writings of Patanjali, the Sanskrit grammarian, who perhaps was an eye-witness of the struggle and also by Strabo, the Classical writer.

Menander's Invasion

Somewhat about the same time, Magadha was invaded by the powerful neighbouring king of Kalinga, named Kharavela. All available evidence indicates that Kharavela failed in his enterprise.

Kharavela of Kalinga

* Some say that it was Demetrius that invaded the Sunga territories.

Aswamedha Sacrifice

In the meanwhile, the Crown Prince was distinguishing himself in a war against the Raja of Vidarbha. All these successes justified the performance of an *Aswamedha* sacrifice by Pushyamitra. The performance of this sacrifice, which was in abeyance during Mauryan rule, indicates a period of Brahmanical revival.

Last of the Sungas

Pushyamitra was succeeded by his son Agnimitra, who was a brave warrior. The successors of Agnimitra are mentioned in the *Vishnu Purana* to be eight in number. These kings had very little power and they were puppets in the hands of their Brahman ministers. Perhaps most of them died very young, as all these eight kings do not occupy more than 49 years. The last king Devabhuti was addicted to vice of all sorts; and he was murdered by his minister Vasudeva Kanva, who thus usurped the throne (72 B.C.)

The Kanvas (72 B.C. to 27 B.C.).

The Kanvas

Vasudeva Kanva, the founder of the dynasty, was succeeded by three others. Nothing definite is known about this short-lived dynasty of Brahmans. The last of this line was murdered by an Andhra king*.

The Andhras.

Early History

The earliest references to the Andhras are to be found in the *Aitareya Brahmana* and also in the epics from which all that we can gather is that they were a people living in the north-east of the Deccan and possessed of considerable power. A more definite piece of information about them is given by Pliny (1st century A.D.) From him

* Their chronology is a matter of controversy, as well as their relation to the Sungas.

we learn that the Andhras, in former times, perhaps in the days of Chandragupta Maurya, possessed 30 walled towns and a very large army. The capital of their kingdom was Srikakulam on the lower course of the Krishna. The Andhras are next mentioned in the Asokan Edicts as being subject to the Imperial control, though enjoying a large degree of autonomy. We know that Asoka waged only one war, *viz.*, the Kalinga War. In all probability either Chandragupta Maurya or Bindusara effected their conquest.

Immediately after the death of Asoka, the Andhras became independent and rapidly spread their power in the south under an able king Simukha (last quarter of the 3rd century B.C.) who probably established the Satavahana dynasty.* The second king of this line was Krishna under whom the Andhras extended towards the west and north. The successor of Krishna was Sri Satakarni who figures in the Nanaghat Inscription. It is therefore evident that the early Andhra kings brought the whole of Berar, Central Provinces and Hyderabad State under their control. This Satakarni of Nanaghat fame celebrated many *Aswamedha* sacrifices. These kings warred in the region of Vidarbha with the Sungas ; and coins and inscriptions show that they were in possession of Vidisa and Ujjayini in the middle of the 2nd century B.C. Perhaps it is this possession of Ujjayini that gave them an imperial status along with the Mauryas and others mentioned in the Puranas. ' For, many

The Satavahanas

* According to one opinion, the dynasty had its origin in the neighbourhood of the Bellary District. The following remarks of Dr. H. Raychaudhuri in regard to the origin of the Satavahana kings may be noted :—" There is reason to believe that the Andhrabritya or Satavahana kings were Brahmanas with a little admixture of Naga blood. The *Dvatrimsatputtalika* represents Salivahana as of mixed Brahmana and Naga origin. The Naga connection is suggested by names like Skanda—Naga Sataka, while the claim to the rank of Brahmana is actually put forward in an inscription. In the Nasik prasasti of Gautamaputra Satakarni the king is called ' *Eka Bamhana*,' *i.e.*, the unique Brahmana."—pp. 220-1 of *The Political History of India.*

years after this, the Andhra history lies in darkness.' In or about 28 B.C., an Andhra king, Kuntala Swatikarna invaded Magadha and slew the last of the Kanvas as has been already stated. There are not sufficient materials to follow the history of the Andhras further till we reach the 17th king of the line as given in the Puranic lists. He was Hala, a great patron of Prakrit literature. The next famous Andhra ruler was Gautamiputra Satakarni (109 A.D. ?) in whose time the Sakas had established various principalities in the western regions of the country. Gautamiputra Satakarni waged a war of extermination against these foreign settlers. But the fruits of victory did not remain long, for in the reign of his son Vasishtiputra Sri Pulumavi (135—163 A D.) these Saka settlers (Western Satraps as they were called) regained most of their lost possessions under their chief Rudradaman. Pulumavi was compelled to remain in peace with Rudradaman who gave his daughter in marriage to the Satavahana. The loss of his western dominions is indicated by a shifting of the Satavahana capital to Paithan in the Nizam's dominions. Yajna Sri (173—202 A,D,) was the last important ruler of the Andhras who retained some vestiges of the former greatness of the line. After him, the power of the Andhras was broken up.*

Gautamiputra Satakarni

The exact cause that brought about the downfall of the Andhras is difficult to find. It is however surmised that after Sri Pulumavi, the country was largely governed by military viceroys, who in the last days of the empire, set up independent rule in their separate jurisdictions. These military chiefs were largely of Naga origin called variously

Causes of Decay

* The questions of the relations of Gautamiputra and Vasishtiputra to each other, and the general relations of the Satavahanas to the foreign Saka Satraps are discussed clearly by Mr K. A. Nilakanta Sastri in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (October, 1926, pp 644-665).

as Maharathis, Nagas and Chutus. The most important of such principalities was the kingdom of Banavasi over which reigned a Chutu, who also bore the name of Satakarni. Later on the Pallavas, as a result of a marriage alliance with the Chutu chief of Banavasi obtained what was once the southern provinces of the Andhra empire. Another cause for the disintegration of the Andhra empire is to be sought in the series of foreign invasions in the 2nd century A.D, such as those of the Sakas and the Abhiras, a race of cowherds. But it is unnecessary to pursue the matter further.

SECTION II. RELIGION AND LITERATURE AND THE CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

Introduction

In the previous section the political history of North India including that of the Andhras has been narrated. We shall now take a rapid review of the religious condition of the period extending from the days of the Buddha to the end of the second century after Christ.

The Position of the Jains

In the 5th and 4th centuries B. C. three principal religions were contending for supremacy, *viz.*, Brahmanism, Buddhism and Jainism. Of these, Brahmanism was the oldest faith and it received rude shocks from both Mahavira Vardhamana and the Buddha who organized their systems on a missionary basis. Pious and learned monks of the two latter faiths travelled about throughout the country and preached their respective creeds. The Jains organized many *Sanghas* and learning the vernaculars of the various regions through which they passed, they proclaimed the new message to the peoples of South India and the island of Ceylon. As a result many Tamil kings became converts to Jainism.

Jainism in the Tamil Land

The early Brahmi inscriptions found in the Madura and Ramnad districts are attributed to the Jain monks who occupied the caves of hills in these districts so early

as the second century B. C. But the zeal displayed by Asoka in spreading the doctrines of the Buddha must have checked the growth of Jainism in the northern lands. Asoka no doubt was tolerant of Jainism as well as of Brahmanism; but the series of Edicts which he issued and the vigour with which they were enforced by the state officials must have affected adversely the growth of Jainism. As a matter of fact Jainism was forced to take refuge in the south-eastern lands especially in the kingdom of Kalinga whose king Kharavela (2nd century B. C.) was a staunch Jain. Jainism continued to exist in Kalinga down to the time of Harsha (7th century A. D.)

Jain Revival

The death of Asoka and the consequent beginning of the fall of the Empire gave a fresh impetus for the propagation of the Jaina faith in Northern India. From the well-known Mathura inscriptions of the 2nd century A. D., we gather that Mathura was a centre of Jainism even before the 1st century A. D. The Tamil epic, *Silappadikaram* ascribable to the 2nd century A D. and whose author was a Jain, mentions the existence of many Jaina monasteries in the Tamil land. However the growth of Jainism was not so great as that of Buddhism. The causes for such slow progress were (1) the early schism of the Jaina church into the Svetambaras and Digambaras; (2) the existence of a rival creed with similar doctrines, *viz.*, Ajivika founded by Gosala, a sometime disciple of Mahavira; (3) powerful state-support for Buddhism; (4) revival of Brahmanism under the ægis of the Sungas and the Kanvas.

Buddhism—a National Faith

Buddhism, on the other hand, had a glorious career since the days of its inception. Gautama Buddha's magnetic personality and the simple nature of his doctrines had gained even during his life-time a large number of followers. On his death, 500 of his disciples met in a general council at Rajagriha to gather together

his sayings. A second Buddhist general council was held before the time of Asoka at Vaisali "to settle disputes between the more and the less strict followers of Buddhism." It was Asoka that made Buddhism a world-wide religion. He is credited with having supported 64,000 priests and built 84,000 buildings and monuments for the benefit of both the monks and the laity. Regal religions greatly prosper; and it is therefore no wonder that Buddhism reached its zenith in the time of Asoka, whose Empire in India was the largest at any time. The missionary impulse given to Buddhism by Asoka bore ample fruit Ceylon and north-west China (*i.e*, Khotan, Kashgar, etc.) became definitely Buddhistic in religion. Buddhism also profoundly affected religious thought in countries outside India, like Syria and Egypt, as there was continuous intercourse between these regions and India.

Buddhism after Asoka

After the death of Asoka, state support was withheld from this faith. As we have seen, one of the successors of Asoka was a worshipper of Siva. Samprati, a grand-son of Asoka, who ruled the western provinces, became a Jain. The effect of Asokan Edicts on the Brahman population has already been stated. From the 2nd century B. C. onward, the sun of Buddhist glory began to sink. In remote parts of India such as the extreme south and Ceylon, the religion had still adherents, but as a national faith that it had been in the days of Asoka, it ceased to exist. A great change also took place about the 2nd century A D in its essential doctrines. Buddhism was given a new form by the 'casteless foreigners' who embraced it These foreigners were the Sakas and the Yueh-chi, a section of whom established the Kushan dynasty in north-west India. Finding it difficult to get a place for them in the caste-bound Hindu society, they found it advantageous to embrace Buddhism which does not recognise

'Mahayana' Buddhism

caste. In this new form the Buddha was worshipped as a deity. This is a gross change from primitive Buddhism. The Chinese called this 'the Mahayana' or 'the Great Vehicle' while the older system was called 'the Hinayana' or 'the Lesser Vehicle.'

Brahmanism

From what has been stated already it should be obvious that in the 6th century B C, Brahmanism was assailed by both the Jains and the Buddhists. Ousted from the country it was not. Brahmanism was never a missionary faith. On the other hand, it was tending to become narrow and exclusive. Thanks to Asoka's toleration of the faith, some of the great men continued to develop the philosophical aspect of Hinduism. But their position was slowly undermined during the days of Asoka owing to the levelling policy he pursued in religious matters. After the *coup de grace* of Pushyamitra, Brahmanism was in the ascendant. An era of sacrifices was once again introduced and there was an enormous growth of popular religious literature also. Many of the principles of the rival faith were incorporated in this practical religion and to attract the masses many of the popular superstitions also Indeed Hinduism has been compared to the octopus that stretches its tentacles far and wide, absorbing whatever that is good in rival religions and giving it a distinct Hindu colour.

Prakrit and Sanskrit

One factor that helped very much the development of Brahmanism was the gradual diffusion of Sanskrit. Sanskrit (*Sam-Skrite* = put together) is the refined and literary form of the vernaculars. The Vedas were written in an older form of Sanskrit. The language was standardised by a great grammarian, Panini (4th century B. C.). This refined form was understood only by the cultured and hence the masses could not appreciate the higher teachings of the Vedas. On the other hand, Gautama Buddha adopted the vernacular—called the

Prakrit—as the chief vehicle of his thought and hence the rapidity with which he was able to gain adherents to his religion. The Jains also used Ardha-Magadhi, another form of Prakrit, for their religious literature. With the downfall of the Mauryan dynasty, there was a revival of Sanskrit; and many popular treatises expounding Hindu philosophy and rules of conduct were written, Prakrit grew to be less popular and even the Jains and the Buddhists began to imitate the Brahmans and composed many works in Sanskrit. Thus the *Jataka-mala* of Aryasura, dealing with the former births of the Buddha was composed entirely in Sanskrit as well as the *Mahavastu*, another Buddhist work of the 2nd century B. C. With the revival of Sanskrit, the Jains used the Sanskrit language for literary purposes. Thus the use of Sanskrit by the followers of the heretical faiths, Jainism and Buddhism, was a triumph for Brahmanism.

Religion and Society under the Satavahanas

In the period of the Andhra-Satavahana rule, Buddhism continued to flourish in the Deccan; and numerous caves were excavated, used either as *Chaitya-Grihas* (temples) or as *Layanas* (residential quarters for Buddhist *Bhikshus* and mendicants). Brahmanism was also in an equally flourishing condition. Sacrifices, as we have already seen, began to be performed. Dharma, Indra, Vasudeva, Siva and Skanda seem to have been the most popular deities worshipped. We also find many foreigners embracing either Buddhism or Brahmanism. Numerous examples are quoted of such men.*

The Classes of the People

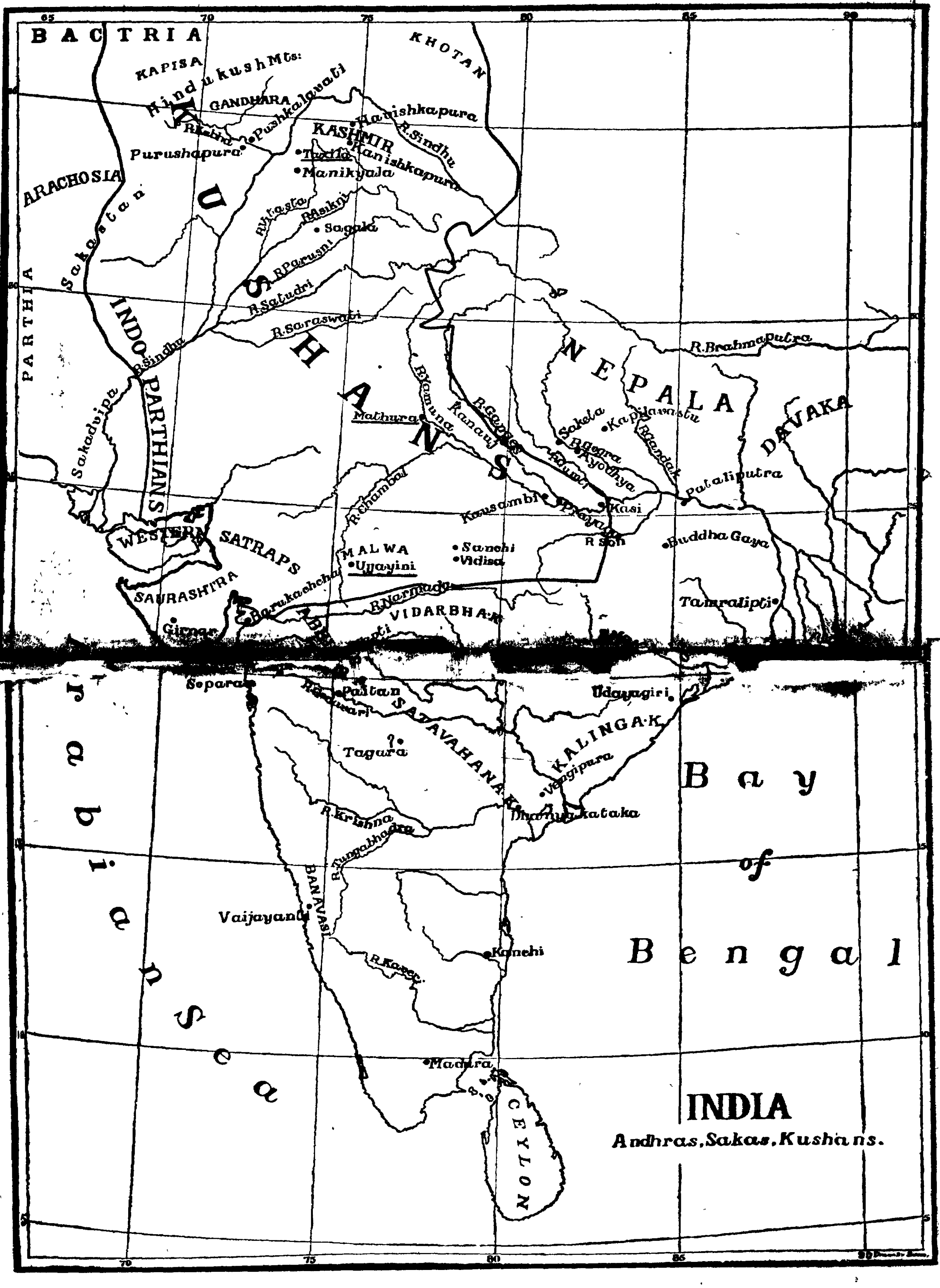
Highest in society came the feudatory chieftains known as Mahabhojas, Mahasenapathis, etc. Next came the officials of the king; equal to them were the big merchants and leaders of caravans. Lower in the social scale came the cultivators, the physicians, the goldsmiths, the druggists and others. The middle class

* D. R. Bhandarkar: "*The Dekhan of the Satavahana Period,*" pp. 77—83: *Indian Antiquary, 1919.*

people were split up into *grihas* (homesteads), *kulas* or *kutumbas* (families). We hear of heads of merchant-guilds exercising large municipal powers in towns. Gold *suvarnas* and silver *karshapanas* were in use as currency; and there were copper coins also. Money was loaned out at interest; and examples occur of guilds and other corporate bodies taking deposits at interest. There were numerous craft-guilds, like those of oil-millers, potters, weavers, corn-dealers, etc. There was also a brisk trade between different parts of the country; we hear of travellers and pilgrims going to and fro, as from Vaijayanti (Banavasi) near the west coast to Nasik. Foreign commerce was equally brisk and ports like Broach greatly flourished. Inland marts also existed as at Paithan, and at Tagara* which largely traded in cotton goods, onyx stones, and other commodities.

Trade-Guilds, etc.

* Identified with Ter (in the Nizam's Dominions) by scholars.


BACTRIA
KHOTAN
KAPISA
Hindukush Mts:
GANDHARA
Pushkalavati
Kanishkapura
KASHMIR
R.Sindhu
Purushapura
Taxila
Kanishkapura
Manikyala
ARACHOSIA
Sakastana
KUSHANS
Vitasta
R.Asikni
Sagala
R.Parusni
R.Satudri
R.Saraswati
PARTHIA
INDO-PARTHIANS
R.Sindhu
NEPALA
R.Brahmaputra
DAVAKA
Sakadvipa
R.Yamuna
Mathura
Kanauj
R.Ganges
Saketa
Kapilavastu
Ayodhya
Pataliputra
Kausambi
Prayaga
Kasi
R.Chambal
WESTERN SATRAPS
MALWA
Ujjayini
Sanchi
Vidisa
R Son
Buddha Gaya
SAURASHTRA
Barukachcha
R.Narmada
VIDARBHA.K
Tamralipti
Girnar
Sopara
Paitan
SATAVAHANA.K
Udayagiri
KALINGA.K
Tagara
Vengipura
Bay of Bengal
R.Krishna
Dhanyakataka
R.Tungabhadra
BANAVASI
Vaijayanti
Kanchi
R.Kaveri
Arabian Sea
Madura
CEYLON
INDIA
Andhras, Sakas, Kushans.

CHAPTER VIII.

FOREIGN INVASIONS, IMMIGRATIONS AND INFLUENCES IN INDIA.

SECTION I. THE INDO-GREEK DYNASTIES.

The Revolt of Bactria and Parthia against the Seleucids

The Seleucidan Empire built up so laboriously by Seleucus Nikator was soon broken up; and two of the regions which asserted their independence were Parthia and Bactria (to the north of the Hindu-Kush). The revolt of Parthia was a national uprising led by a chief, Arsakes, who founded a dynasty (*cir.* 250 B.C.) which lasted for nearly five centuries. The Bactrian revolt was due to a military revolution on the part of Diodotus, the Greek governor of that territory. The kingdom founded by Diodotus was a military state dependent on the vigour of the Greek settlers. It had a very chequered career and was frequently troubled by revolutions; and the kings instead of defending their northern frontier against the nomad tribes, frittered away their energies in useless military exploits south of the Hindu-Kush and into India.

The Indian Invasions of the Bactrian Greeks

The son of Diodotus was overthrown by Euthydemos another adventurer of the same type, who had to war with the Seleucid monarch of Syria, Antiochus the Great, who attempted to rival Alexander the Great and led an expedition into the borderland of India. Demetrius, the son of Euthydemos, and son-in-law of Antiochus, was secure in the possession of Bactria for a time and turned to projects of Indian conquest; he succeeded in getting possession of the Kabul valley and

portions of the Punjab and Sind (*cir.* 190 B.C.) But while he was engaged thus, his hold on Bactria was weakened and his throne was usurped by another adventurer Eukratides (*cir.* 175 B.C.). Demetrius, however, retained hold of his Indian conquests and became known in European tradition as King of the Indians. He fixed his capital at Sangala (Sagala—the modern Sialkot) in the East Punjab. Eukratides also conquered the Kabul valley and portions of the Western Punjab about 162 B.C. Thus there came to be two rival Greek powers (Yavanas as they were known to Indians)—the dynasty of Eukratides in power in Lower Afghanistan and the dynasty of Demetrius in the Eastern Punjab.

Demetrius and Eukratides

Parthia was a wedge which separated these Greeks from their kinsmen in Syria and Asia Minor. Moreover in Bactria, the Greeks were exposed to the steady pressure from the north exerted by the Saka tribes who were pushed on from behind by fresh swarms of barbarians. In these circumstances, the Greeks had to abandon their hold on Bactria about 135 B. C. in the time of the son of Eukratides and to come south of the Hindu-Kush and take refuge in their Indian conquests.

Greeks driven out of Bactria

Of the two Greek ruling powers in India, that of Demetrius made itself known by its coins and by the greatness to which their capital Sagala attained. Demetrius himself was a great warrior and seems to have invaded the Sunga dominions; and according to one opinion it was he that should be identified with the Yavana invader of Pushyamitra Sunga's dominions referred to by Patanjali and by Kalidasa. Menander was also of the house of Demetrius. He was also

The Kingdom of Sagala

Menander

a conqueror; and some say that he was the man who invaded the Sunga dominions.* His coins are found in the Kabul valley, the Punjab and further east. His fame lived on in tradition both among the Greeks and also among the Indians; and he is the Milinda, the Yavana king of Sagala, who is one of the two characters in the *Milinda Panha* (*Questions of Milinda*), a Buddhist philosophical treatise. He was supposed to have been converted to Buddhism—an instance of the manner in which foreigners came to be quickly absorbed in Indian culture. The successors of Menander were not powerful. Many of them are noted only for the beautiful coins which they struck. They came to be pressed from the south by the Saka power which had already planted itself in Arachosia and in the lower valley of the Indus; and their dominions in the East Punjab were completely swallowed up by the Saka invaders by about 50 B. C.

Final Extinction of Sagala

The other Greek dynasty of Eukratides ruled in the Kabul valley and in the region of Gandhara (their chief towns being Kapisa in Eastern Afghanistan and Pushkalavati in the Peshawar District). Their dominions extended as far east as the Jhelum. They were pressed on their flank by the advancing Sakas who also came conquering up the valley of the Indus from their base in Sind, and in course of time separated, as if they formed a wedge, the Yavanas of Gandhara from those of Sagala. The Sakas conquered Pushkalavati and Taxila from the house of Eukratides about 75 B. C. and confined it to Kapisa. Then the Sakas absorbed the remnants of the kingdom of Sagala; and finally they swallowed up the last remains of the kingdom of Eukratides in the Upper Kabul valley about 40 B. C. One of the kings of Taxila

The Kingdom of Taxila

King Antialcidas

* There is nothing to show the exact line demarcating the conquests of the two.

was Antialcidas whose ambassador Heliodorus went to the king of Vidisa, probably a Sunga. The Yavana ambassador erected a stone column in honour of Vasudeva and inscribed his name thereon calling himself a follower of Vishnu (Bhagavata.) This shows how quickly the Greeks adopted Indian faiths.

SECTION II. THE SCYTHIANS AND THE PARTHIANS IN INDIA.

The Scythians (Sakas) and the Parthians (Pahlavas) are always mentioned together and in association with the Yavanas in Indian books. The Sakas were nomadic tribes who originally occupied the territory to the north of the Jaxartes river and who about 160 B. C. came to be pushed south into Bactria by another horde of nomads known as the Yueh-Chi who moved from north-western China. The Sakas burst in large numbers upon Bactria and upon the Parthian kingdom in the period between 140 and 120 B.C. They overthrew Greek rule in Bactria and passed south-west towards Herat and Seistan which region they so fully occupied that it came to be known as Sakastan. After a bitter struggle with the Parthian power, they were pushed back from occupying Ariana by Mithradates II the Great, King of Parthia (123—88 B.C.) The Sakas could not also expand down the valley of the Kabul river where the Greek power lay like a wedge. They now forced their way through another channel, through Arachosia and the Bolan Pass into the country of the Lower Indus which consequently came to be known as Indo-Scythia (of the Greek geographers) and the Saka-Dwipa (of the Hindus).* In the course of their association with the Parthians in Ariana and Sakastan, subordinate governments came to be

Sakas and Pahlavas

Saka Migration

Their Occupation of Seistan

and of the Lower Indus Valley

* *Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, p. 567.

occupied by mixed Saka and Pahlava rulers; and sometimes the same family included both Parthian and Saka names. These Saka and Parthian rulers of Eastern Iran, Seistan and Arachosia assumed normally the Parthian title, king of kings (Shahan-Shah), and struck coins with a Greek legend on the obverse, as Greek was the language of coins throughout the Parthian Empire.

Saka-Pahlava Dynasties

There were two principal ruling families of Saka-Pahlavas which assumed this title; (1) the family of Maues (the Great King Moga of inscriptions) which was possibly of the Saka race; and (2) the family of Vonones which ruled over Drangiana and Arachosia and which was probably Pahlava. These two families became associated with each other in a later generation. Under each of them ruled *Satraps* and military governors who were mostly Sakas.

1. Maues and his Successors

Maues conquered Gandhara and Taxila from the Greeks, and might have also wrested the kingdom of Sagala in Eastern Punjab from them. His date, known to us from a reference to the year 78 of an unknown era, is ascribed by scholars to about 75 B.C. His successors consolidated their empire in India; while the other family of Vonones was reigning as suzerain over Eastern Iran and one of its viceroys is supposed to have swallowed up the last stronghold of the Yavana power in the Kabul valley.

2. Vonones

Azes I and Gondophernes

Maues' successor, Azes I, is regarded by some as the founder of the Vikrama Era beginning in 58 B.C. He was a powerful prince who, judging from his coins, ruled for 40 years; and third in succession from him came King Gondophernes who ruled in the period 19—45 A.D. He is supposed to have succeeded to the

dominions of the Saka-Pahlavas both in Eastern Iran and North-West India. He is connected in Christian tradition with the legends of St. Thomas, which are certainly as old as the 3rd century A.D. St. Thomas was the Apostle of the Parthians; and it might have been that a Christian mission actually visited the court of Gondophernes. The further tradition that the Apostle founded the early Christian Church of the Malabar Coast and was martyred at St. Thomas' Mount near Madras is more difficult to prove or to believe. After Gondophernes the Saka-Pahlava power declined and was swallowed up by the new power of the Kushanas.

The Tradition of St. Thomas

Associated with Maues and his successors were *Satraps* whose coins and inscriptions are of great value to us. There were such Satrapal families ruling in Taxila, Mathura and other places in the north and also in Kathiawad and Malwa. In the Satrapal system of rule, the Great Satrap was usually associated with another Satrap who was his son and who succeeded him in due course. There were besides the Satraps other Saka military chiefs, some of whose Hinduised names we come across in inscriptions. These Saka Satraps continued to rule even after the suzerain dynasty of Maues was overthrown by the Kushanas.

Dynasties of Satraps

Besides the Northern Satraps of Taxila and Mathura there were other Satrapal families ruling in Saurashtra and Malwa whose coins have been discovered in large quantities in these regions. In fact a study of these coins has enabled scholars in the main to construct the history of these Satraps.

Of the North and of the West

Bhumaka and Nahapana

The earliest known of these Satraps was Bhumaka; and he was followed by Nahapana who really laid the foundations of the Saka kingdom extending from Malwa to Nasik on the Upper Godavari. Nahapana is supposed to have reigned from 78 A.D. to 124 A.D. Some say that his date was about the beginning of the 1st century A.D. His son-in-law was a Saka, Ushavadata, known to us from inscriptions. Nahapana's line was overthrown by the Andhra-Satavahanas, as has been told before. Another dynasty of Satraps was founded by one Chashtana who is mentioned by Ptolemy, the geographer,

Chashtana and Rudradaman

as Tiastenes, ruler of Ozene (Ujjayini). Chashtana had a large number of successors, some of whom are called *Kshatrapas* and others *Mahakshatrapas.* His grand-son Rudradaman* made himself a Mahakshatrapa and was the lord of Malwa, Saurashtra,

The Great Satraps of the West

Cutch, Sind, Aparanta and Nishada and other regions. His fame is best known by his inscription at Girnar (in Kathiawar) dated Saka 72 (A.D. 150) which mentions his double victory over the Satavahana lord of the Deccan and over other powers and his other achievements. From the same source we learn that he repaired

Final Extinction of the Satraps by the Guptas

the great Sudarsana Lake originally built by the Mauryas. Rudradaman was a learned man of varied accomplishments. He was succeeded by his son and grandson and a long line of *Kshatrapas* who were finally extinguished by the Imperial Guptas in 310 or 311 Saka. The Sakas became quickly Hinduised and greatly promoted the cause of orthodox Hinduism.

* He is supposed to have ruled conjointly with Chashtana according to the Andhau Inscriptions.

SECTION III. THE KUSHANA EMPIRE AND KANISHKA.

The Yueh-Chi Race

The Yueh-Chi who swept away the last vestiges of Greek rule in Bactria and of the Saka-Pahlava rule in Arachosia and in the Indus valley were a race living originally in North-West China. Being pushed out of their home by another nomadic race, they passed along the route to the north of the Desert of Gobi, defeating the Sakas whose territory they occupied. On the Oxus they settled; and in course of time they passed the nomadic stage and adopted settled habits of life. The whole people were divided into five tribes, each ruled by a *Yavuga*. After about a century, probably in the middle of the first century A.D., the Kushanas, as one of the tribes was called, gained supremacy over the rest and founded a united kingdom. They conquered the country south of the Hindu-Kush, and under their first notable king, Kujula Kadphises, conquered Arachosia and the Kabul valley from the Pahlavas. Kujula Kadphises is supposed by historians to be a contemporary of, or to have lived a little later than, Gondophernes; his successor, Wima Kadphises, extended the Kushana dominion from the Kabul valley into the Punjab.

United under Kushana Supremacy

Kadphises I and II

The Dates of their Rule

The exact date at which the Pahlavas came to be superseded by the Kushanas is unknown. But it may be between 45 and 64 A.D.—the first date being the last recorded year of Gondophernes and the second being the date, according to interpretation, of the mention of a Kushana king in a purely Indian monument.* Saka Satraps continued to rule under Kushana overlords; and in this manner the Kushana power came to be extended over the Satraps of Saurashtra and Malwa.

* *Cambridge History of India*, Vol I, pp. 584-5.

According to Rapson, the two Kadphiseses were followed by Kanishka in 78 A.D. Kanishka started an era which was in use for some time; and Rapson would say that this era of Kanishka was used by the Satraps of Western India and Malwa; and "it was in consequence of its long use by the Saka princes of Western India that the era became generally known in India as the Saka era—a name which effectually disguises its origin."*

The Rule of Kanishka

* There has been a keen controversy going on over the date of Kanishka. It is now fully settled that he succeeded the two Kadphiseses. A number of inscriptions relating to Kanishka and his successors bear dates of an era ranging from 4 to 99. Cunningham referred these dates to the Vikrama Era. V. A. Smith formerly referred them to the Laukika Era prevalent in Kashmir; and Prof. Oldenberg declared that the era was the Saka Era founded by Kanishka. In his *Early History of India* (4th editon), Dr. Smith says that Kadphises II who completed the conquest of North India, ruled from 78 to about 110 A.D. and that Kanishka came to the throne most probably in A.D. 120; and it is possible that the Kushana Era was distinct from the Saka Era and began later. There are some strong objections to the theory that Kanishka ruled in the middle of the 2nd century A.D. The theories that he ruled in the 1st century B.C. and as late as the 3rd century A.D. might be both set aside easily.

Kushan Chronology

The following tentative chronology has been framed for the Kushana period by Mr. R. D. Banerjea (*Indian Antiquary* for 1908):—

Circa A.D. 15—Consolidation of the Yueh-Chi tribes into the Kushana Empire.

" A.D. 20—Kadphises I conquers Kabul.

" A.D. 55—Accession of Kadphises II.

" A.D. 78—Accession of Kanishka—establishment of the Saka Era.

" A.D. 85—Kanishka's conquest of Magadha.

" A.D. 91—110. War against the Chinese; ultimate victory.

" A.D. 115—General Church Council of Buddhism.

" A.D. 123—Death of Kanishka.

" A.D. 138—Latest known date of Huvishka.

" A.D. 176—Latest known date of Vasudeva.

" A.D. 213—Date of the Mathura Inscription of the year 135.

Kanishka's rule extended as far as Benares, as is evidenced by his inscription at Sarnath. In a Chinese book, he is said to have conquered India as far as Pataliputra, carrying off from that place the famous Buddhist saint Asvagosha; also he warred successfully with Parthia. He most probably conquered Kashmir; and his most glorious exploit was the conquest of Yarkhand, Kashgar and Khotan from the Chinese who had been previously successful over him.

His Empire

Hiuen Tsang calls Kanishka the king of Gandhara, possibly on account of his long residence in Afghanistan. Kanishka convened in Kashmir an important Buddhist General Council (*Mahasangha*) which settled the disputes between the various sects and purified the canon from error. Asvagosha arranged and systematised the commentaries on the canon drafted by the Council; while Vasumitra, another great scholar, composed the *Mahavibhasha*, an encyclopædia of Buddhist philosophy which still exists in Chinese.

The General Council of Buddhism

Coins show that Kanishka was a Buddhist; but he respected also Zoroastrian and Greek divinities. The stories of his devotion to Buddhism should be accepted with great limitations. Kanishka should have been converted to Buddhism only late in the reign; and his Buddhism was the Mahayana in which the Buddha appeared among a crowd of gods and became "himself a god with his ears open to the prayers of the faithful and served by a hierarchy of Bodhisattvas and other beings acting as mediators between him and sinful men." The Mahayana system was not directly due to Kanishka, though largely promoted by him; and it is traced, as we have read in a previous chapter, to even

Kanishka's Buddhism

The Features of the Mahayana System

earlier stages. In this newer faith, images representing the Buddha and the Bodhisattvas were habitually worshipped; a special doctrine of salvation by faith in the Buddha was inculcated; ritual was elaborated; and there was a tendency to rely on formulæs and charms. Mahayanist ideas were shaped and formulated by Nagarjuna, a great writer, who, according to some, was more or less a contemporary of Kanishka. Kanishka's Empire was open to contact with the Chinese Empire on the north-east and the Persian and Roman Empires on the west; and "full-grown Buddhism met the nascent Christian faith in the academies and markets of Asia and Egypt." The opinion of scholars is that it was under the influence of such foreign faiths as those of Christianity and Persia that Mahayanism developed.

Foreign Influences

The art forming the outward expression of the new faith also received foreign impulses. The Buddhist sculptures of Kanishka and his successors are found most abundantly in the district of Gandhara and are supposed to belong to the so-called Gandhara style. Dr. V. A. Smith would call the style more properly as a Græco-Buddhist one, because "the forms of Greek art were applied to Buddhist subjects, with considerable artistic success in many cases. Thus images of Buddha appear in the likeness of Apollo, the Yaksha Kuvera is posed in the fashion of the Phidian Zeus and so on. The drapery follows Hellenistic models."* The ideals of Græco-Roman art which were prevalent in Western Asia travelled through Persia and Khotan (within Kanishka's empire) to the Indian frontier region and to China. Sculpture was most prolific in Gandhara and in the neighbourhood of Mathura; and the Gandhara style continued to dominate the minds of Indian sculptors in those regions for a long time.

The Gandhara School of Art

* *The Oxford History of India*, p. 136.

Kanishka, like Asoka, was a great builder; and there have been excavated the remains of a large city which he built near Taxila. His capital was Peshawar, where he built a great wooden tower over some relics of the Buddha. Kanispur (Kanishkapura) in Kashmir, now a village, is supposed to have been built by him. Kanishka reigned for about 45 years; and if legends about him are to be believed, he met a violent death. His court was rendered illustrious by the great Buddhist teachers mentioned above as well as by Charaka, the famous physician. A mutilated headless statue of the great king was discovered near Mathura some time back.

Kanishka, a Great Builder

Huvishka, the successor of Kanishka, is known from a large number of coins and inscriptions. He had acted as his father's viceroy in India and is supposed to have enjoyed rule for a total period of over 50 years. He is said to have founded a town, Hushkapura, in Kashmir; he was like his father, a patron of Buddhism and had an eclectic taste for a medley of Greek, Persian and Indian deities. The next king was Vasudeva whose records range from the year 68 to the year 99 of the Kanishka era. He does not appear to have been a Buddhist and his coins show the figure of Siva, attended by Nandi. It was possibly in his reign that the Satraps of Saurashtra became independent and the Trans-Indus provinces came to be lost.

The Later Kushanas; Huvishka, Vasudeva, etc.

After Vasudeva, the Kushana power decayed; its remnants were divided into several small monarchies which existed up to the middle of the 4th century A. D. Kushana rule at Kabul was finally swept away by the White Huns. According to one opinion the Yueh-Chi disappeared in India owing to conquest by the Nagas; and "the prevalence of Naga rule over a

The End of Kushana Rule

considerable portion of Northern and Central India in the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D. is amply attested by epigraphic evidence." Anyhow the last years of the second, and the first years of the third century A.D. witnessed the decadence and disappearance of the three great monarchies—the Parthian, the Kushan and the Andhra powers—almost simultaneously.

SECTION IV. SOCIAL CONDITION AND FOREIGN INFLUENCES.

Summary of Foreign Influences in the Previous Age

We have already noted how there was trade between India and the Eastern Mediterranean countries from very ancient times. The invasions of Darius and of Alexander and of Antiochus the Great of Syria strengthened the lines of communication between India and the West. We also saw the effects of Alexander's conquest and the degree to which Persian influences were seen at work in the Mauryan court and administrative system. Some say that the lion-capitals and the pillars of the Mauryan period were borrowed from Persia; while Dr. V. A. Smith would trace the bas-reliefs of the Asokan epoch to an Alexandrian origin.

Greek Influences under the Indo-Greek Rulers, etc.

The Indo-Greek dynasties of the Punjab and the valley of the Kabul issued very beautiful and remarkably good coins which were imitated by the Great Satraps of the West, the Kushans and the Guptas. The Greek coin *drachma* passed into the vernacular of the country; from it came the Prakrit *dramma* and the modern vernacular *dam*. A corrupt form of Greek was supposed to have been spoken at the courts of the Indo-Greek, the Parthian and the Saka rulers. The Indo-Parthians had an additional reason to use Greek as that was the court language of Parthia.

Absorption of the Foreigners among the Indians

In other respects these foreigners quickly became absorbed in the native population and religions—as seen in Heliodorus calling himself a Bhagavata (Vishnu worshipper), Menander becoming a Buddhist and the Saka Satraps becoming quickly Hinduised. In many cases Hindu names were adopted by these foreigners. The Indo-Greeks left no permanent marks upon the institutions of India, except in the field of coinage and the decorative arts.

Stimulus given to Trade with the West

In the time of the Sakas, the Pahlavas and the Kushanas, there was an immense amount of trade passing between India and the West. This was stimulated by the Roman conquest of Egypt (B. C. 300) and their suppression of piracy in the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. The discovery of the regular monsoon winds blowing across the Indian Ocean by the Greek mariner, Hippalus (*cir.* 45 A. D.), enabled ships to sail before the winds and thus reach the western coast of India in a very short time—the return journey being also accomplished equally swiftly.

Roman Trade and Coins

The powerful empire of the Kushanas in the 1st and 2nd centuries A. D. touched the Persian and Chinese Empires and facilitated trade along the land-routes from North-West India to the Mediterranean. The Romans, always fond of pearls, silks and spices, now began to demand and consume them as well as other articles of eastern luxury. India received in return a large quantity of Roman gold—especially the South of India which had a monopoly of spices, pearls and beryls. We will on a later occasion have an opportunity to know more of the rich trade between South India and the Mediterranean. The Kushana and Saka monarchs imitated or restruck Roman coins. This trade, mainly carried on

by sea, was the main theme of several books by the Greeks and the Romans which bear upon the subjects of Indian geography and commerce. The most noted of them are the Roman Pliny who wrote about 77 A D., and Ptolemy, the Geographer, who lived about 150 A.D. Western writers like Pliny complained of the drain of Roman gold in return for unproductive luxuries from the East*

Foreign Art Ideas—The Gandhara School

Kanishka borrowed the Greek script and the Parthian title—*Shaonano Shao Kaneshki Koshano* (Kanishka, the Kushan, King of Kings). As we saw Kanishka imported Greek artists from Asia Minor to decorate his buildings and shrines. The productions of these foreign artists and of their Indian imitators, especially sculpture, still cover the region of Gandhara; and their influence upon Buddhistic art was very considerable. Some say that on account of this contact early Christian Gnosticism was influenced by Indian philosophy. Greek astronomy cultivated carefully at Alexandria, gradually spread into India; and to some extent ideas of medicine were borrowed from the Greeks by Charaka and other Indian physicians. These influences, mainly intellectual, were felt in later times especially under the Guptas. Apart from Persian influence which was felt in the Mauryan epoch, the Græco-Roman influence began to penetrate into India from the 1st century A. D. and was best seen in sculpture and coinage.

Other Mutual Influences

The Fusion of the Natives and Foreigners

The condition of the people in this period was one of fusion. New races who came along with the invaders settled in the land and were quickly absorbed by the population. Old ruling castes and clans were replaced by new ones, mostly Hinduised foreigners. Old kingdoms and boundaries vanished being replaced by new ones. The forces of Hinduism began to gather strength and made for a revival whose effects were best seen in the next Gupta epoch. Village life should have continued as in the previous ages; and the new trade that was opened up should have made for the creation of large centres of trade.

* See for details the chapter on *South Indian Kingdoms.*

CHAPTER IX.

THE GUPTA EMPIRE.

The Age of the Guptas

The period from 320 to 480 A.D. is the greatest and most glorious epoch in the history of Hindu India. It was the age of the Guptas who created a big empire second only to that of the Mauryas. It was also the age of Hindu Renaissance when the latent genius of the Hindus found its fullest expansion in the fields of art and poetry, science and architecture.

Origin of the Dynasty and its Early History

The origin of the Guptas is lost in obscurity. According to the testimony of I-Tsing, a Chinese pilgrim (7th century A.D.), a Maharajah Sri Gupta was ruling in Magadha in the 2nd century A.D. One of his successors was Ghatotkacha, the father of Chandragupta I, who was the real founder of the Gupta imperial line. A statesman and a warrior, he, like Bimbisara of old, strengthened his position by marrying a Lichchhavi Princess, Kumaradevi. That he owed his imperial position to his wife is indicated clearly by the coins he struck which contain on the obverse the figures of his wife and himself and on the reverse the legend '*Lichchavayah.*' During his time he effected the conquest of all countries comprising the present provinces of Bihar and Oudh. To commemorate the establishment of his Empire, he also founded an era, called the Gupta era, which starts roughly with the year 320 after Christ.*

Chandragupta I.

* Dr J. F Fleet's theory that the Gupta era began 240 years after the Saka era has held the field up to now. But there are not wanting scholars who hold on the strength of evidence furnished by Albiruni, Chinese tradition, Jain tradition, etc., that the Gupta era should be really regarded as starting from A.D. 200-201. With such a supposition the so-called darkness of the 3rd century A.D. would vanish. For a full account of this view, see *The Mysore Archæological Survey Report* for 1923, pp. 9—30.

The Digvijaya of Samudragupta

Chandragupta I. had several sons from among whom he selected Samudragupta as the most intelligent and the best fitted to succeed him (326 A.D.). Carefully trained by his father, Samudragupta more than justified his choice and fulfilled the expectations that were formed of him. From the beginning he had resolved to bring about the political unification of India. His ambition was perhaps to imitate the example of the great Mauryan Emperors and include within his dominions those tribes and countries subject to Asoka.*

His Southern Conquests

Turning first towards the south, for all *digvijayas* should begin and proceed towards the right, he attacked the country of South Kosala of which the ruler was Mahendra.† Next he subdued Vyaghraraja of Mahakantara, a forest country adjoining the Kosala country. Passing southwards, the Gupta Emperor attacked next Mantaraja whose country was in the Kalingadesa, the modern Orissa. Samudragupta's next victim was Swamidatta, the ruler of a very large tract of country which once formed two separate kingdoms with two capitals, Pishtapura (modern Pithapur) and Kottur near Mahendragiri. Other kings whom Samudragupta defeated and who acknowledged his supremacy were Damana of Erandapali (Ganjam District ?), Vishnugopa of Kanchi, a Pallava ruler, Nilaraja of Avamukta (not yet identified), Hastivarman of Vengi (Peddvegi near Ellore), Ugrasena of Palaka (in the lower regions of the Krishna) and Kubhera of Daivarashtra (Yellamanchili in the Vizagapatam district.)‡

* *Vide* the learned article on Samudragupta by Dr. S. Krishnaswami Ayyangar in the ***Mysore University Magazine***, Dec. **1923**; and also R. K. Mookerji: ***Men and Thought in Ancient India***, 1924, Ch. IV.

† This account follows the order of places mentioned in the famous Allahabad Pillar inscription of Samudragupta.

‡ The subject of Samudragupta's course of conquest is one of controversy. The view that is adopted here is that of Dr. S. Krishnaswami Ayyangar ; Jouveau Dubreuil in his *Ancient History of the Deccan* maintains that Samudragupta's conquests were confined to the east coast of the Deccan and were not carried either to the south or to the west of the Deccan as supposed by Fleet ; see pp. 58—61.

While thus Samudragupta was subduing the southern kingdoms, a North Indian chief, Chandravarman, raided the territory of Magadha which had the effect of procuring the return of Samudragupta to head-quarters. The Gupta monarch next undertook a similar expedition against the chiefs and kings of Aryavarata, the Madhyadesa of Buddhist records.*

Annexation of Northern Lands

The fame of this conqueror spread far and wide so much so that distant kings sought his friendship and alliance. Among those who entered into diplomatic relationship with him was King Meghavarman of Ceylon, who sent him costly presents and sought in return permission to build a monastery at Buddha Gaya for the use of pilgrims from Ceylon—a request that was readily granted by the broad-minded Emperor.

At the conclusion of his conquests, Samudragupta celebrated the *Asvamedha* sacrifice, and to commemorate the event, issued a medal bearing the legend, "King of kings, having conquered the world, conquers heaven—the unopposed warrior."

Aswamedha Sacrifice

Samudragupta made no attempt to permanently annex the southern kingdoms which he overran. His victorious career in the south was in the nature of a *dharmavijayi* (*i.e.*, he defeated the kings but did not annex their kingdoms). His northern conquests, on the other hand, were incorporated with the Empire. The whole Empire was divided into *vishayas* or imperial provinces. Samudragupta's Empire thus extended from

Extent of his Dominions

* The territories of these petty rulers must be located in the Gangetic Doab and along the borderland of Central India and Rajputana. The one record that gives us an account of Samudragupta's conquest, namely, the Allahabad Pillar inscription (engraved on the Asokan Pillar) contains the following names of kings whom he conquered. These were Rudradeva, Matila, Nagadatta, Chandravarman, Ganapathi Naga, Nagasena, Achyuta, and Nandi Balavarman. Besides these Samudragupta conquered nine frontier tribes.

the Hoogli on the east to the Jumna and the Chambal on the west and from the foot of the Himalayas to the Narmada on the south. Skirting round these limits there were states and tribes which rendered tribute and obedience to the Emperor.

His Personal Attainments

Samudragupta was not merely a man of war. He was equally proficient in the arts of peace. He was a great patron of learning and himself was no mean poet and musician. Here is what his biographer and court-poet, Harisena, says about him :—"He put to shame the preceptor of the lord of gods and Tumburu and Narada and others by his sharp and polished intellect and choral skill and musical accomplishments. He established his title of *Kaviraja* by various poetical compositions." This observation is attested for by the lyrist type of coins issued perhaps by the Emperor himself—in which the king is depicted, seated on a couch and playing on the *vina*.

Chandragupta II Vikramaditya 375 A.D.—413 A.D.

Samudragupta was succeeded by one of his sons who assumed the name of Chandragupta (375 A. D.) To distinguish him from his grandfather, he is generally known to history as Chandragupta II, Vikramaditya. The two chief events of his reign were (1) his matrimonial alliance with the Vakataka king Rudrasena II and (2) his annexation of Malwa, Gujarat and the peninsula of Saurashtra.

The Vakatakas

The first of the events mentioned above constitutes an act of diplomacy of the highest rank. The Vakatakas in the time of Samudragupta were a formidable power and they occupied the region between Bundelkhand and Upper Karnata It is not evident whether Samudragupta carried his arms into the Vakataka country. In the time of his son, the Vakataka Maharaja occupied a geographical position from which he could easily have pre-

vented an invasion from the north of the Saka dominions of Malwa-Saurashtra.* It was therefore a prudent act of Chandragupta II to have given his daughter Prabhavati in marriage to Rudrasena II, the Vakataka King of the Deccan, and thus obtained the subordinate alliance of that monarch. It was by this act alone that Chandragupta II was able to effect the conquest of the western regions.

Conquest of Malwa, Gujarat and Saurashtra

The conquest of the Saka Satrapies of the West took a long time, and for nearly six years Chandragupta II led his force into the territories of Malwa, Gujarat and Saurashtra. The last of the Satraps, Rudrasinha, was defeated and slain and the territories were annexed to the Gupta dominions. This conquest of the western regions was important as thereby the trade and commerce of the Empire increased. "The income from the customs duties collected at the numerous ports on the western coast which were now brought under Gupta rule must have been a valuable financial resource.† One result of this conquest was that Ujjayini, the chief city in Malwa and famous as a centre of learning, became a sort of second capital to the Empire, and served as a connecting link between the west coast and the heart of Aryavarta.

Principles of Toleration

Chandragupta II, who, after his conquests of the Western Satrapy, assumed the title of Vikramaditya, was an able sovereign, well-beloved by the people. Though a Vaishnava in faith, he freely appointed other religionists to high offices in the state. Thus his commander-in-chief Amrakardava was a Buddhist, while

* Dr. Smith, in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, **1914**. See Dubreuil: *Ancient History of the Deccan*, Ch. IV., Sec I and S. K. Iyengar, in the *Annals of the Bhandarkar Institute*, Vol V, pp. **31—59**. The Vakataka dynasty rose to power under Vindhyasakti in the region adjacent to that of the Great Satraps. Some of their line like Pravarasena assumed the title of *Samrat*. In the race for imperial power, the Vakatakas were pushed out and accepted alliance with the Guptas.

† Dr. Smith; *Oxford History of India*, p. **152**.

his other ministers were Saivites. The big Empire of Chandragupta II was divided into a number of provinces called *Desas* and *Bhuktis*, each of which again was sub-divided into districts. The *Desas* were governed by officers called Goptris or wardens of the marches* and the *Bhuktis* by princes of the imperial family. Very often the Emperor consulted corporations of bankers, traders and merchants in regard to administrative details. The king himself was assisted by a body of ministers, some of whom accompanied him wherever he went.

Brahmanical Activity

As has been remarked at the beginning of the chapter, the period of the Guptas was the most glorious epoch in the history of Hindu India. The ascendency of the Brahmans at this period was at its highest. Under their guidance and auspices, many *asvamedha* and other sacrifices were performed by the first three Gupta Emperors. This rise of Brahmanism to popular favour and royal support is further seen in the great development of Classical Sanskrit literature of which mention will be made presently. In the meantime we shall enquire into the causes for the rapid spread of Brahmanism Indeed the religion of the Hindus at this period can hardly be called 'Brahmanism.' That religion had undergone great changes in an attempt to become popular. We have seen how both Buddhism and Brahmanism adopted or incorporated wholesale aboriginal superstitions to win the masses. In this race for popular favour, Brahmanism came out triumphant. It slowly but silently assimilated some of the soundest principles of Buddhism and even adopted similar methods in preaching the new religion to the people at large. Temples for the worship of the Puranic gods were multiplied and impressive processions and festivals were inaugurated. The old rigours

Causes for Brahman Ascendency

* *The Political History of India*, by H. Ray Chauduri, p. 286.

of caste were relaxed and the casteless foreigners who had established independent principalities and the Sudra monarchs, such as the Guptas, were assigned to the Kshatriya caste, and Brahman priests also vied with each other in giving *gotras* to rulers. Thus coaxed and flattered, no wonder, rulers of states encouraged in every possible way the development of Hinduism. The cults of Vishnu, Siva, Chandi, the Sun, etc. became very widespread and popular.*

Literary Activity—Revival of Sanskrit

Almost coincident with the revival of Brahmanism was the rivival of Sanskrit literature. It has already been seen how Sanskrit gradually displaced Prakrit and even the Jains and Buddhists used Sanskrit for their secular purposes. The Guptas in particular were great patrons of Hindu learning in all its branches. Many of the *Puranas*, though undoubtedly old, were revised and edited in the time of the first three Guptas. The *Navaratnas* (Nine Gems) of Sanskrit literature are by tradition supposed to have formed part of the court of Vikramaditya (identified with Chandragupta II). Who is there, in the world of culture, who has not heard of the name Kalidasa, the immortal author of *Sakuntala ?* Besides *Sakuntala*, Kalidasa wrote also two other dramas, *Vikrama and Urvasi* and *Malavika-Agnimitra.* In lyrical poetry also no one has excelled him Kalidasa's *Megha-duta* or 'Cloud-Messenger' and *Ritu-samhara* or 'Cycle of the Seasons'—two lyrical poems, full of sweet-sounding verses have retained an undying charm of their own. His two best remembered epic poems are the *Raghu-vamsa*, describing the history of the kings of the Solar line and *Kumara-Sambhava* or 'Birth of the War-God' dealing with the love of the god Siva and the mountain maiden Uma.

* Sir R. G. Bhandarkar : *A Peep into the Early History of India* (1920 ed.), pp. 51—54.

The dates of not a few of the *Navaratnas* (Nine Gems) are still open to doubt; but it seems certain that Aryabhatta, the great astronomer, flourished in the later Gupta period. He was born in 476 A. D. and wrote a book bearing his name, where he maintained the theory of the rotation of the earth round its axis and also explained the cause of the solar and lunar eclipses. Good authorities are now disposed to assign the political drama entitled the "Signet of the Minister' (*Mudra-Rakshasa*) to the period of the Gupta rule.

The Nine Gems

The Guptas encouraged secular learning irrespective of the caste or faith of authors. Thus Samudragupta was intimate with the learned Buddhist author, Vasubandhu. There was enough of legal learning in the time of the Guptas.

Development of Scientific Literature and its Causes

The *Code of Manu* was perhaps composed before the advent of the Guptas; but the *Code of Yajnavalkya* and *Narada Smrithi* fall within the period of the Hindu Renaissance such as the epoch of the Guptas undoubtedly was. *Bhashyas* or commentaries on the *Sutras* came also to be written. Philosophy and logic were also very well developed. Architecture, sculpture, painting and other fine arts also flourished This brilliant renaissance of intellectual and artistic activity was largely due, as Dr. V. A. Smith says, to the personal patronage of the Gupta monarchs, the contact with foreign civilisations like those of Persia, China and the Roman Empire (there was communication with the Mediterranean world both by land and sea) and to the continuous progress of peace and trade in the country as is evidenced by Fa Hien.

"The Gupta period," says Havell, "politically was an Indo-Aryan revival, for the Guptas were undoubtedly the representatives of the Aryan Kshatriya tradition and champions of the Aryan cause against Aryavarta's adversaries of Turki, Hun, Dravidian and other alien descent. From the religious point of view it was marked by a Vaishnava propaganda in which Krishna, the Aryan hero of the *Mahabharata*, was put forward as the exponent of Indo-Aryan teaching in opposition to the Buddhist doctrines, chiefly Mahayanist, favoured by Aryavarta's alien enemies." In the field of architecture and painting also, the age was as rich as in the domain of literature. What is known as the '*Sikhara shrine*', one of the most characteristic features of temple architecture, found its fullest development in the Gupta period. "Apart from temple architecture, the art of the Gupta period is illustrated by some of the earlier halls and chapels of the splendid abbey of Ajanta, one of the great Universities of the time. The fragments of the wonderful frescoes still remaining on the walls are not only masterpieces of painting, but, both in their vivid imagination and in their realistic portrayal of contemporary life, they give a striking impression of the masterful creative impulses which were then stirring the mind of India."

Significance of the Gupta Rule

Much light is thrown on the social, political and religious conditions of India in the time of Chandragupta II by the narrative of a Chinese pilgrim, Fa-Hien. India had been visited from time to time by learned men from China, the most famous of them being Fa-Hien, Hiuen-Tsang and I-Tsing. The first of these came to India in 405 A.D. and stayed in the country visiting various centres for nearly six years, a sufficiently long period to form a correct impression of men and things. The main object of this pilgrim was to collect manuscripts and holy relics relating to Buddhism,

Fa-Hien, the Chinese Pilgrim, 405 A.D.—411 A.D

and consequently Buddhist affairs loomed large in his account. Nevertheless the incidental observations he made in regard to society in general enable us to form some idea of the state of the Gupta empire in the fifth century A.D.

At Magadha

Fa-Hien stayed for three years at Pataliputra, the capital city, learning Sanskrit, and he was struck with wonder at the palace which Asoka built. "The inhabitants of Magadha are rich and prosperous and vie with one another in the practice of benevolence and righteousness. Every year on the eighth day of the second month, they celebrate a procession of images...The heads of the Vaisya families establish houses for dispensing charity and medicines." At Pataliputra there stood only two monasteries occupied both by the Mahayana and Hinayana monks, who were learned and whose lectures were listened to by pupils who came from different quarters. Buddhism flourished near Mathura and along the course of the Jumna, though everywhere there were signs of Brahmanical revival.

Malwa

Unprosperous Tracts

Referring to the Middle Kingdom (Malwa) the pilgrim noted with satisfaction that the administration was mild and popular. The criminal law was not severe. The people generally followed the Buddhist rules of life. Though gold coins were certainly issued from the mints of the Emperor, Fa-Hien notes that cowry shells formed the common currency of the country. Though certain tracts were prosperous, several localities connected with early Buddhism were in ruins or in the process of decay. Thus Buddha Gaya was surrounded by jungle; Sravasti was in ruins and Kapilavastu and Kusinagara were deserted by the people, save for a few monks.

Return of Fa-Hien

Fa-Hien left India in 411 A.D. embarking for Ceylon and Java at Tamralipti, then an important port at the mouth of the Ganges.*

* Fa-Hien's account has been translated into English by many scholars, S. Beale Dr Legge, and Dr. H A Giles The re-translation of ***The Travels of Fa-Hsien (399-414 A.D.) or Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms***, published in 1923 by Dr. Giles is the easiest and best for the student

CHAPTER X.

THE HUNS AND THE BREAK-UP OF THE GUPTA EMPIRE.

The glorious reign of Chandragupta II Vikramaditya was followed by that of Kumaragupta, his son. The prestige of his father's arms maintained the power of Kumara for over thirty years. But towards the end of his career, the Empire was seriously disturbed by the invasion of the Pushyamitras, perhaps a confederated northern tribe possessed of considerable vigour and skill in arms. An inscription which gives us the details of this struggle records the defeat of the imperial forces at the hands of the Pushyamitras. The Empire would have collapsed but for the Crown Prince Skandagupta who after considerable difficulty overthrew the enemy and thus retrieved the falling fortunes of his house.

Kumaragupta (415—455 A.D.)

Kumaragupta died in 455 A.D. Though not a warrior, he was a great patron of learning and arts and was a tolerant ruler besides. He was succeeded by the ablest of his sons, Skandagupta, who, as we have seen already, averted the Pushyamitra danger. His reign which was full of stirring events extended from 455 A.D. to 467 A D. His first task was to take up arms in defence of Aryavarta against a foe famous alike for their cruelty and intrepid methods of warfare, the Huns, of whom we shall study in detail presently. These Huns poured down into the Indus valley through the north-western passes like a devastating plague, plundering and pillaging, wherever they went. The Gupta monarch bravely met the fierce hordes in battle and the barbarians

Skandagupta 455—467 A. D.

were decisively beaten back. To commemorate the event, sacrifices were offered to the Devas; and as a thanks-offering, a Vishnu Pillar bearing an inscription was erected, which still stands at Bhitari in the Ghazipur District.

The Huns come again

Thus for the time being Aryavarta was safe; but the Huns repeated their attacks in the closing years of his reign. Occupying Gandhara or the north-west Punjab, these ferocious enemies of civilisation advanced into the interior and 'attacked Skandagupta in the heart of his dominions.' Though the able Gupta sovereign often kept the enemies at bay, the fact that the Huns were able to get fresh hordes of recruits from their base beyond the passes, proved too strong even for the great resources of the Empire which finally succumbed. We have no material for the study of Skandagupta's later struggles with the Huns; but it is pretty evident that the whole of north-west India passed on to the invaders. That the strain of warfare had affected the finances of the Empire is clearly indicated in the considerable debasement of the currency of the period. The gold *suvarnas* issued by Skandagupta show a decline in the amount of pure gold from 108 to 73 grains.*

Polity under Skandagupta

Notwithstanding the reverses he had sustained at the hands of the Huns, Skandagupta must be considered to be a great sovereign who worthily strove to maintain the traditions of the Empire. He retained hold of the whole of Northern India including Gujarat and Kathiawar. From the fact that Buddhist writers of the period called him by the name of Vikramaditya of Ayodhya, it should be inferred that he effected a change of capital from Pataliputra to the more centrally situated Ayodhya. The work of administration was regularly

* Vincent Smith: *Early History of India*, 4th ed., p. 328, and Havell: *Aryan Rule in India*, p. 174.

carried on by able viceroys like Parnadatta, governor of the west *

Religion

The Emperor continued to be tolerant towards all faiths. Indeed in religious matters, the people were of the same tendency as their sovereign. Thus the Kahaum inscription mentions the erection of Jaina images by a man 'full of affection for Brahmanas.' The Emperor himself was a Vaishnava. Buddhist chronicles have claimed Skandagupta as a devout disciple of Vasubandhu, an eminent Buddhist divine of the period. But, as Havell remarks, it would be a mistake to conclude that he renounced the worship of Vishnu. "It simply meant that he regarded the Buddha rather than Krishna, as the Divine Guru who showed him the right way to worship Vishnu. Skandagupta could therefore continue to show on his imperial coinage the symbols of a pious Hindu ruler without any inconsistency or offence to the spirits of his illustrious ancestors."†

Empire not Extinct

It is generally supposed that the Gupta Empire broke up after the death of Skandagupta (467 A.D.) It was not so. On the other hand, literary and epigraphic evidences indicate that even in 600 A.D. the direct rule of the Guptas extended from Malwa to the Brahmaputra. ‡

Puragupta and Narasimhagupta Baladitya

Skandagupta was immediately succeeded by his half-brother Puragupta whose short rule of five years, judged by the purity of the coinage, witnessed signs of a restored prosperity of the empire. Puragupta's successor was his son Narasimhagupta Baladitya, a great patron of Buddhist learning, whose many benefactions in the cause of Buddhism were

* Hemchandra Raychaudhuri : *Political History of Ancient India*, p. 294.

† Havell : *Aryan Rule in India*, p. 172.

‡ Hemchandra Raychaudhuri : *Political History of Ancient India*, p. 295.

piously remembered for long afterwards. It is suggested by some historians that it was this Baladitya who led a great combination against the tyranny of the Hun ruler Mihiragula.* But evidences indicate that the Baliditya who suppressed Mihiragula was altogether a different individual.

Identification of Baladitya

" It has been overlooked that Hiuen Tsang's Baladitya was the immediate successor of Tathagatagupta, who was himself the immediate successor of Budhagupta, whereas Narasimhagupta Baladitya was the son and successor of Puragupta who in his turn was the son of Kumaragupta I. and the successor of Skandagupta. The son and successor of Hiuen Tsang's Baladitya was Vajra, while the son and successor of Narasimha was Kumaragupta II. It is obvious that the conqueror of Mihiragula was not the son of Puragupta but an altogether different individual. The existence of several kings of Madhvadesa having the *Biruda* Baladitya is proved by the Sarnath inscription of Prakaditya."†

Gupta Decline

Narasimhagupta must have died in or about 473 A D. and he was succeeded by his son Kumaragupta II (died 476 477 A D.). The greatness of the Guptas disappears from this time and 'the imperial line passes by an obscure transition into a dynasty comprising eleven Gupta Princes, who appear to have been for the most part merely local rulers in Magadha."‡

The Rise of the Maukharis and the Gaudas

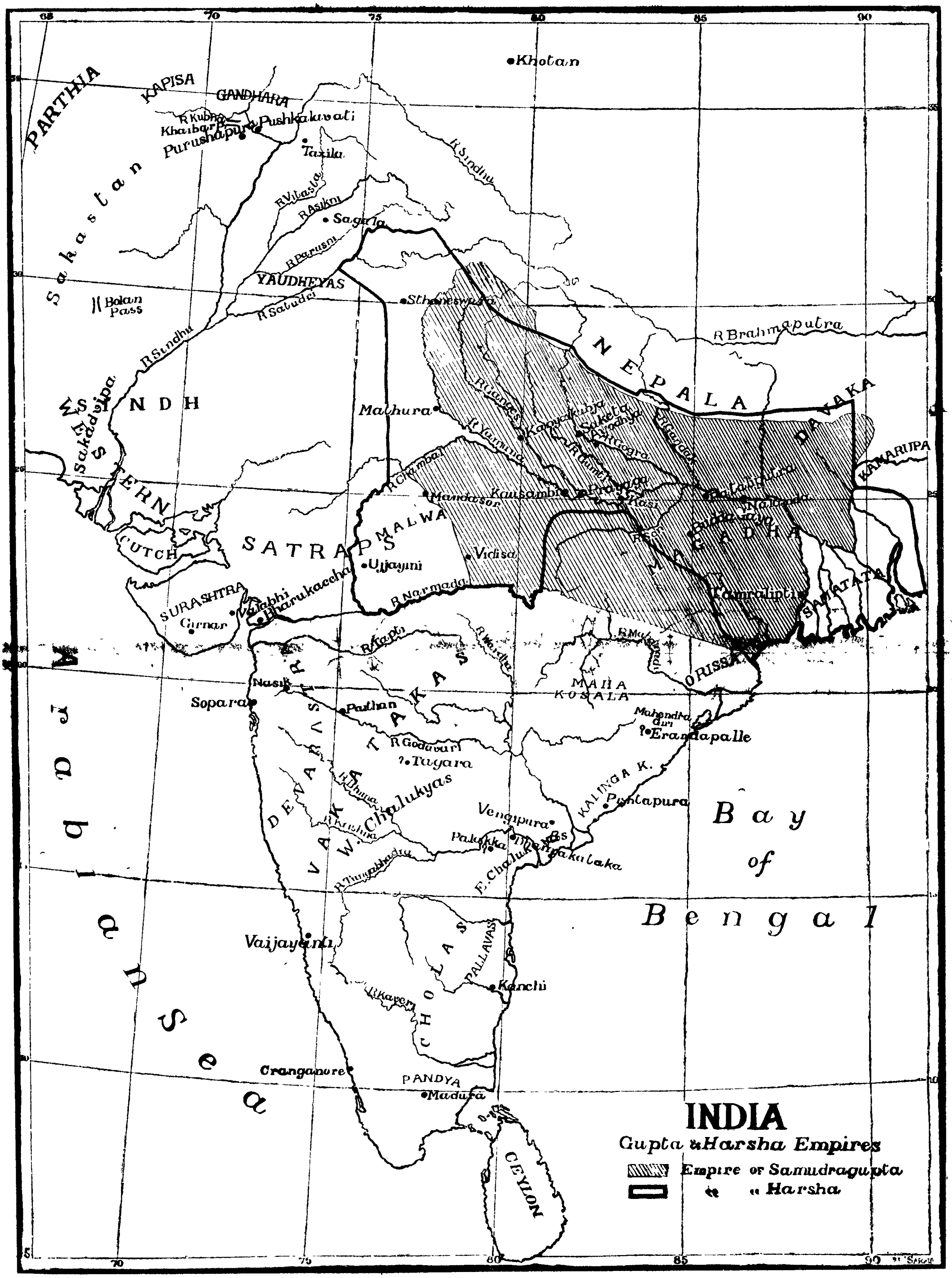
The history of the later Guptas of Magadha is very obscure. What little of political influence and prestige was left to them was sought to be undermined by two powers that played a considerable part in the history of the times. These were the Maukharis and the Gaudas. The former engaged the Guptas in a vital struggle for the mastery of the Doab. The

* V. A. Smith : *Early History of India*, p. 293.

† H. Raychaudhuri : *Political History of Ancient India*, pp. 297-8.

‡ The following is a list of kings who succeeded Kumaragupta II, and who are often referred to as the Later Guptas of Magadha :—

Budhagupta	Kumaragupta III	Madhavagupta
Tathagatagupta	Damodaragupta	Adityasena


INDIA
Gupta & Harsha Empires
Empire of Samudragupta
" Harsha
PARTHIA
KAPISA
GANDHARA
Pushkalavati
Purushapura
Taxila
Khotan
Sakastan
Sagala
YAUDHEYAS
Bolan Pass
Sthaneswara
R. Brahmaputra
NEPALA
SINDH
WESTERN SATRAPS
Mathura
Kanyakubja
Saketa
Ayodhya
Kausambi
Prayaga
Kasi
Pataliputra
Nalanda
MAGADHA
DAVAKA
KAMARUPA
Mandasor
MALWA
CUTCH
Ujjayini
Vidisa
SURASHTRA
Valabhi
Bharukaccha
Girnar
R. Narmada
Tamralipti
SAMATATA
ORISSA
MAHA KOSALA
Nasik
Sopara
Paithan
R. Godavari
Tagara
VAKATAKAS
Mahendragiri
Erandapalle
KALINGA K.
Pishtapura
Vengipura
W. Chalukyas
DEVARASHTRA
Palakka
E. Chalukyas
Bay of Bengal
Arabian Sea
Vaijayanti
CHOLAS
PALLAVAS
Kanchi
Cranganore
PANDYA
Madura
CEYLON

Maukharis had their seat of power in the Upper Ganges valley and were divided into two groups. At first mere feudatories, they took advantage of the rapidly-shrinking power of the Guptas and rose to sovereign power. The Gaudas were a Western Bengal people and by their valour and skill proved themselves indispensable to the Guptas. It is these Gaudas that ultimately broke up the Gupta Empire. In the first half of the 8th century A.D., a Gauda king occupied the throne of Magadha. At the beginning of the 9th century A.D., Magadha passed under the sway of the Pala kings of Bengal.

The Huns: Early History

Let us study more in detail about the Huns who, as we have seen, were mainly responsible for bringing down the edifice of the Gupta Empire. They were a race of foreign nomads originally occupying the steppes of Central Asia. A great increase in their population and the sterile nature of the soil in which they dwelt, impelled them to seek fresh lands. The whole race divided itself into two streams, one proceeding towards the valley of the Oxus and the other towards the region of the Volga. Those who directed their predatory movement towards the Oxus are known to history as the White Huns. Originally known as Hoa or Hoatun, these savages later on assumed the name of Ye-tha-i-li and were subsequently designated briefly the Yethas. They crossed the Oxus about 420 A.D. and since then proved to be a source of constant danger to the kingdom of Persia and the neighbouring regions. King Bahram V of the Sassanian dynasty was at first successful in resisting the inroads of these savages; but in 484 A.D., King Firoz was defeated and killed. The failure of Persia opened the gates of India to the Huns who next assailed the Kushan kingdom of Kabul. We have already seen that about 458 A.D. they made

Baladitya	Mahasenagupta	Devagupta III
Krishnagupta	Devagupta II	Vishnugupta
		Jivatagupta II

an unsuccessful attempt to attack the Gupta Empire in the time of Skandagupta (458 A.D.) Appearing in greater numbers ten years later, they dealt such heavy blows at the empire that it lay prostrate. The leader of this force was probably the Hun chief Toramana, of whom we can gather some information from inscriptions and coins. That he established himself as a ruler of Malwa in Central India is a well-recognised fact. From the distribution of his silver coins, it is to be inferred that he was master of a considerable part of North India. If the reference in *Rajatarangini* is to this Toramana, Kashmir also formed part and parcel of his empire.

Toramana

Toramana was succeeded by his son Mihiragula (about 510, according to Dr. Smith). At this time, India was only one of the many provinces of the Hun Empire whose headquarters were at Bamyin near Herat.* A number of Buddhist and Jain writers agree in stating that Mihiragula was one of the most powerful sovereigns of India. His name was regarded with terror and the memory of his cruel deeds long survived him. He held Kashmir under his grip and is said to have even led an expedition to the distant island of Ceylon.†

Mihiragula

Powerful as he was, Mihiragula had soon to face a combination of forces against him. The cruel deeds of this oppressor of mankind, the foremost among the wicked men as the Jain writer Gunabhadra calls him, disgusted every one. King Baladitya of the Gupta dynasty was the

Collapse of the Huns

* V. A. Smith: *Early History of India*, 4th ed., p. 335.

† The following account of his war against Ceylon is preserved in the Kashmir Chronicle and may be valued for what it is worth. "He once noticed that his queen wore on her bosom a garment made of cloth from Ceylon marked with golden foot-prints of the king of the land. Enraged at this imaginary insult, he resolved to uproot the power of that king and going over to Ceylon dethroned him and on his return is said to have scattered the power of the Chola, Karnata, Lata and other kings of the South." V. S. Dalal: *A History of India*, Vol. II, p. 153.

earliest to take vigorous measures against the Hun who was defeated in battle.* Mihiragula was finally subjugated by *Janendra* Yasodharman of Mandasor shortly before 533 A.D.†

Extinction of the Hun Empire

The subsequent history of Mihiragula may be briefly told. Defeated in battle and imprisoned, he however procured his freedom. When he went to his capital, Sakala, he found it seized by a younger brother. He next went to Kashmir and sought shelter under its ruler, only to abuse the hospitality shown him, by raising a revolt against his benefactor whom he overthrew. This ill-gotten power he did not long enjoy, for he died soon. Nor did the Hun Empire long survive Mihiragula. Its territories in the Oxus valley succumbed between 563 and 567 to the combined attacks of the Turks and the Persians, the former eventually taking possession of all the countries included in the Hun Empire.‡

Sung Yun on the Huns

The Huns have left little obvious trace of their domination in India. There was nothing in their civilisation which could be absorbed by the Indian people. A Chinese traveller, Sung Yun, who travelled in North-West India about 520 A.D., has left the following account of Hun court manners and customs which will be read with interest:—"The lands of the Ephthalites are abundantly watered by the mountain streams which fertilise them and flow in front of all dwellings. They have no walled towns but keep order by means of a standing army that constantly moves here and there. These people also use felt garments. In the summer, the people seek the cool of the mountains; in the winter, they disperse themselves through the villages. They have no written characters

* See p. 120 *supra* for the identification of Baladitya.

† Raychaudhuri: *Political History of Ancient India*, p. 301.

‡ V. A. Smith: *Early History of India*, 4th ed., p. 339.

and their rules of politeness are very defective ; they have no knowledge at all of the movements of the heavenly bodies. * * * there are no instruments of music visible at all. The royal ladies of the Yetha country also wear state robes which trail on the ground, three feet and more. They have special train-bearers for carrying their lengthy robes. They also wear on their heads a horn in length eight feet and more, three feet of its length being red coral. * * * Both the rich and poor have their distinctive modes of dress These people are of all the four tribes of barbarians, the most powerful. The majority of them do not believe in Buddha. Most of them worship false gods. They kill living creatures and eat their flesh."*

The Hun Element in the Indian population

Though the Huns disappeared as a ruling race, a century of their incursions had left a deep impress upon the sociology and polity of Northern India. Detached bands of Huns, building for themselves hill-fortresses, had continued to stay in India unmolested. In course of time they assumed the title of Rajas and had no difficulty in securing wives from the best of Indo-Aryan families. "There can be little doubt", says Havell, "that the numerous ramifications of the Rajput clans of the present day are the result of the many foreign elements which were assimilated by the Indo-Aryan society from the fourth to the sixth centuries, and in later times." The same authority holds that this racial mixture was in no small measure responsible for the lowering of the Hindu ethical standard and the growth of vulgar superstitions. Indeed Havell goes so far as to assert that with the advent of the Huns in India, Aryan political ideas were debased, and that the authority of popular assemblies underwent gradual decay. In the result, the head of state grew despotic. "Oriental despotism was of Tartar or Mongolian creation ; it was never recognised in

* *Buddhistic Records of the Western World*, Vol. I, pp. xc—xcii.

Indo-Aryan traditional laws."* The influence of the Hun settlements on the Indian people was very marked. We shall read more of it in the next chapter.

One result of the disappearance of the Huns as a political power in India may, in conclusion, be briefly told.

The Maitrakas

The extinction of the Hun power led to the establishment of powerful kingdoms in the west and north-west of India. Of these the most important was that of the Maitrakas, who were of foreign extraction. The founder of the dynasty was one Bhatarka, who established himself at Vala in Kathiawad (close of the 5th century A. D.) The earlier kings of this line paid tribute to the Huns but after their extinction, the Maitrakas became a great power in Western India. Their capital city Valabhi was visited in the 7th century A. D. by the famous Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen-Tsang, who admired it and pronounced it to be a great centre of learning, next only to Nalanda.

* E. B. Havell: *History of Aryan Rule in India*, p. 177.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SEVENTH CENTURY A. D.

HARSHAVARDHANA—THE CHALUKYAS AND THE PALLAVAS.

SECTION I. HARSHAVARDHANA AND HIUEN-TSANG.

The Rise of New Kingdoms

In the confusion that was caused by the Hunnic invasion and settlement, the old political divisions and kingdoms disappeared and new kingdoms rose up. One such kingdom was that of Valabhi in Eastern Kathiawar ruled by the Maitraka dynasty alleged to be of Hunnic origin.* Its founder Bhatarka was a Senapathi; and his sons ruled about the beginning of the 6th century A. D. These kings were Hinduised and considered good Kshatriyas in the time of the celebrated Chinese pilgrim Hiuen-Tsang who visited Western India about 641-2 A.D. This dynasty lasted on till the 8th century. There were also separate kingdoms in Kashmir, Sindh and the Kabul country and the Punjab.

Valabhi

The Gurjaras of Bhilmal, etc.

The Gurjaras, another tribe of Hunnic affinities, carved out a kingdom for themselves at Bhilmal (north-west of Mount Abu) in Rajputana and another branch principality at Broach on the Gulf of Cambay. We shall afterwards see how the Gurjara dynasty of Bhilmal conquered Kanauj and became the paramount power in Northern India in the 9th century.

* *Vide* the last para. in the previous chapter.

Of the many kingdoms existing in Malwa and the Gangetic valley, that of the Maukharis of Kanauj was the most prominent. The Maukhari kings were known to have had close relations with the Guptas of Magadha. The fourth of the line was Isanavarman, who assumed the title of Maharajadhiraj Both he and his son, Sarvavarman, seem to have fought with the Huns. The kings had sway over all the country from the Vindhyas to the region of Oudh and as far east as Bengal. One of the descendants of Sarvavarman was Grihavarman, the brother-in-law of Harshavardhana, who was killed in battle in 606 by a king of Malwa.* When the last Maukhari king was slain, his widow, Rajyasri, the sister of the brothers, Rajyavardhana and Harshavardhana of Thanesvar, was imprisoned. Rajyavardhana resolved to avenge his sister's wrong, and easily routed the king of Malwa, but was himself treacherously slain by Sasanka, the king of Central Bengal, who was an ally of the Malwa ruler. Harsha, the younger brother, now resolved to avenge the double insult to his family. He had naturally to succeed his childless elder brother He promptly rescued his sister who had meanwhile escaped and fled to the Vindhyan forests; and he probably defeated Sasanka also Kanauj and the rest of the Maukhari dominions were taken by Harsha on behalf of Rajyasri. It is this accession of Maukhari power that enabled Harsha of Thanesvar to assume an imperial position..

The Maukharis of Kanauj

Union of Kanauj and Thanesvar under Harsha

* Probably, besides the later Guptas of Magadha, there was another line of the Guptas ruling in Malwa, which set itself up after the disruption of the Gupta Empire and always fought with the Maukharis for supremacy. See C. Vaidya: *History of Mediæval Hindu India*, Vol. I (1921), p. 40.

Harsha's Succession at Thanesvar

The father of Harshavardhana was king of Thanesvar (Sthanvisvara) near Delhi and the holy ground of Kurukshetra. He made his power felt by the Hunas, by the rulers of the Indus basin and by the lawless Lats in Gujarat and Malwa. He came to be known as *Pratapasila*, but died in the midst of his campaigns against the Huns, against whom he had sent his eldest son, Rajyavardhana. Rajyavardhana's victory over the Huns, his subsequent campaign against the Gupta king of Malwa and his death at the hands of Sasanka of Gauda, have been already told. Harsha, the younger brother, continued the war of vengeance against the Malwa and Gauda kings and thus started on "a conquest of the four quarters." Harsha's first campaign was towards the Vindhyas where, with the help of some forest chiefs, he rescued, just in the nick of time, his sister from the flames in which she was about to plunge and where he, along with the sister, first felt drawn towards Buddhism under the influence of a Buddhist saint.

His First Campaign

His *Digvijaya* 606—612 A.D.

For the first six years of his reign, Harsha was engaged in incessant warfare when "the elephants were not unharnessed, nor the soldiers unhelmeted." According to Hiuen-Tsang, the famous Chinese pilgrim, who is one of the chief authorities of the period, he conquered "the Five Indies",* which are stated to be the Punjab, Kanauj, Gauda (Bengal), Mithila and Orissa. While according to Bana, who was "the greatest ornament of the literary circle at Harsha's court" and who wrote a very clever historical romance in Sanskrit about his patron, known as the *Harsha-Charita,* the king reduced Valabhi in the west as well as

* *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India*, by T. Watters: Vol I, pp. 343-4.

His later Conquests

Sind, while the king of Assam sought his alliance from the very beginning. Whether Harsha conquered Nepal as well is not certain, but it is probable that he was acknowledged to be its overlord. It was only on the line of the Vindhyas that the progress of Harsha was checked by Pulakesin II Chalukya, Lord of the Deccan, "from whose suzerainty he had weaned away Valabhi." This campaign may be dated *circa* 620 A D. The last recorded war of Harsha took place in Ganjam in 643 A.D.; and then he "doffed his armour and devoted himself for his few remaining years in the arts of peace and the practice of piety, as understood by an Indian despot."* Asoka was satiated with a single campaign, that against Kalinga. Harsha spent 37 years in warfare (606-643 A.D.), "continuous for six years and intermittent for the rest of the time, before he could be content to sheathe the sword."

His Army

His army consisted mainly of elephants, cavalry and infantry. The Chinese pilgrim states that his peace strength included as many as 60,000 elephants and 100,000 cavalry. The elephants were mainly acquired as tributes or presents or by capture in the elephant forests, the horses came from distant countries like Persia; while there were camel-troops also.

His Tours

Harsha made frequent tours of inspection throughout his dominions with great state and pomp, attended by subordinate chiefs and a numerous following. Hiuen Tsang first met Harsha on his return march from Ganjam and Orissa in his camp in Bengal. The Emperor was the busiest of men and "divided the day into three periods, of which one was given up to affairs of government and to religious works."

* V. A. Smith: *Early History of India* (4th ed.), p. 357.

The System of Administration

Harsha was assisted by a council of ministers. There was a numerous body of officials who were paid in grants of land; while the soldiers were paid in cash. The chief source of revenue was the rent from the crown lands; one-fourth of this was absorbed by the grants given to the great officials; and another fourth by the expenses of government and public worship. Forced labour was employed in large public works; but it was paid for. According to Hiuen Tsang, government was honestly administered; the people lived on good terms with one another and were of pure moral principles. Criminal law was very harsh. Severe punishments took the form of mutilation or of deportation into wildernesses. Taxation appears to have been light; a sixth portion of the produce was taken as the land revenue; light customs duties were levied on goods at the frontier posts and at ferries across rivers.

Hiuen Tsang's Picture of the People

Hiuen Tsang gives a very valuable and truthful picture of the administration of Harsha and of the condition of the people under him. India itself was known to foreigners as "the country of the Brahmans." Sanskrit was the language of the educated classes including the Buddhists; and the best Sanskrit, both spoken and written, was that of Harsha's kingdom (Mid-India). There were various sects of Brahmans including ascetic sects and schools of philosophy, besides the Jains. "Buddhism was then showing signs of decline as compared with Brahmanism. Besides its broad division into Mahayana and Hinayana, it was further split up into eighteen different sects with their own special literature cultivated in the monasteries owned by them."* There

Condition of Religion

* R K. Mookerji: *Men and Thought in Ancient India*, p.179. See also his *Harsha* (Rulers of India), 1926, Chap. V.

were numerous Buddhist monasteries which were very famous as seats of learning where distinguished teachers taught and where the pilgrim studied, sometimes staying for months together. Among the more notable of such monasteries were the Mahabodhi Monastery at Buddha-Gaya which had 1000 ecclesiastics known for their Vinaya observances" and the great monastery of Nalanda "in which was centred the Indian learning of the age." At this place there were more than 10,000 students and 1,500 teachers teaching even secular subjects and Brahmanical learning. Learning was widely diffused throughout the country by means of such monasteries and schools.

and of Education

Kanauj, which became the imperial capital of Harsha, was a city which extended for several miles along the Ganges and contained numerous gardens and tanks. Cities were usually enclosed within brick walls surmounted by towers. The houses of the rich were adorned with halls and terraced roofs. Those of the poor were built generally of brick or wood and thatched; shops were situated on the high-ways; while persons following unclean occupations like butchers, scavengers and fishermen had to live outside the city-limits. Gold and silver coins, and also cowries and small pearls were used as currency. Each caste had its own occupation; and industry was organised on the basis of crafts and guilds. All the people, and particularly the Brahmans and the Kshatriyas, were known for their purity and simple habits. The women of the upper classes were educated. Rajyasri, the sister of Harsha, for example, was instructed by the Buddhist sage, Divakaramitra, and could appreciate the discourses of Hiuen Tsang on Mahayana doctrines. Girls were married very early; and there was the custom of *Sati*.

The People and Social Life

Emigration from the Country

Sea-voyages were common. A Brahman was sent out by Harsha as his envoy to China. The sea-route to China was quite a well-known route. "The age of Harsha was one of extensive emigrations from India, which colonised Java. The emigrations were from the western Gujarat coast of India and are believed to have been caused by political unrest in the country.... Among them were the craftsmen to whom we owe the famous monuments of Borobudur and Prambanam in Java, the best examples of Indian art." *

Harsha's Patronage of Buddhism

Harsha had a leaning towards Buddhism from the beginning of his reign. Later he was inclined markedly towards the Mahayana form under the teaching of Hiuen Tsang. To promote this faith, the Emperor convoked a grand religious assembly at Kanauj to which were invited tributary kings, Buddhist monks and scholars, Brahmans and Jains. Of course, with royal support, Hiuen Tsang maintained his own superiority and that of his creed over rival sects.

The Assembly of Kanauj

Annually Harsha summoned an assembly of Buddhist monks, the best among whom he honoured as his own teachers. He made numerous gifts to Buddhist monasteries and enshrined in a great monastery near Kanauj, a tooth-relic of the Buddha which he got from Kashmir. Kanauj became under Harsha's care a great centre of Buddhism.

The Quinquennial Assembly at Prayaga

The Emperor was tolerant of other faiths and communities. Every fifth year, he convened a great assembly (called the Assembly of *Moksha*) at Prayaga (the confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna) where he used to distribute all his wealth in charity. Hiuen Tsang witnessed the 6th assembly which

* R. K. Mookerji : *Men and Thought in Ancient India*, pp. 190-1.

was thus held; here all the gods, Buddha, Siva, Surya, etc., were equally honoured. He also constructed high-ways and hospitals where were stationed physicians who gave medicines free to poor people and travellers. Bana, his biographer, speaks very eloquently about his works of public utility and his general humanity.

His Learning and Humanity

The Emperor was a great patron of learning and of learned men; he excelled in poetical skill himself; he encouraged poetical compositions by the literary men of his court and himself composed a Buddhist drama, *Nagananda*. Learned men also ascribe to him the composition of two other plays in Sanskrit. Nearly a fourth of the revenue from the crown lands was given away as rewards to learned men and another portion to men of religion. All these pursuits of peace, culture and religion imply the efficiency of his administration; and "the supreme factor in that efficiency was the sovereign himself."

His Death

According to Chinese testimony, Harsha should have died before 648 A.D.—either at the end of 646 or in the beginning of 647, not long after the departure of Hiuen Tsang from India. He had a daughter who was married to the king of Valabhi. According to Bana, he had also a young son. He probably left no heir at his death; and the land was plunged into disorder which was made more serious by a famine.

Hiuen Tsang in India—The Value of his Book.

Hiuen Tsang (also spelt as Yuan Chwang) was the most celebrated of all the Chinese pilgrims who visited India. His fame as the Master of the (Buddhist) Law had spread to all Buddhist countries. He spent about 15 years in India. He had been away from China between 629 and 645 A.D. and returned home with numerous Buddhistic relics and a number of manuscripts of Buddhist works. He travelled over almost every part of India, except

the extreme south; and he described his travels in a book entitled *Records of the Western World* which has been translated into English and other European languages. In this book he described not only the prevailing political, social and religious conditions of the times but also "a considerable mass of ancient tradition, which would have been lost but for his care to preserve it." "His book is a treasure-house of accurate information, indispensable to every student of Indian antiquity, and has done more than any archæological discovery to render possible the remarkable resuscitation of lost Indian History which has been recently effected."*

The character of the pilgrim is revealed best in his biography written by his friend, Hwiu-li: "He had a rare combination of moral and intellectual qualities and traits common to Chinese set off by a marked individuality."†

China was isolated from contact with the outside world by land; while it was a long and perilous voyage from India to China by sea. At first, imperfect and infrequent communications were maintained by way of the Pamir Plateau and Khotan between Chinese Buddhists and Indian priests. 65 A.D. saw the first priest from India despatched to China which kept up a little intercourse with Ceylon.

Chinese Pilgrims and Travellers in India

In the 4th century A.D., monasteries sprang up all over China and the Chinese were allowed to become Buddhist priests. About 400 A. D., Fa-Hien reached India by way of Central Asia and returned after 14 years by way of Ceylon, bearing authentic Buddhist scripture with him. Chinese Buddhists were anxious to obtain complete and accurate copies of the Buddhist scripture as well as

* V. A. Smith: ***Early History of India*** (4th ed.), pp. **14-15.**

† See Watters—*On Yuan-Chwang*, Vol I. p. **13.** Besides this, Beal's version of Hiuen-Tsang's *Travels and Life* may also be noted.

sacred images and relics of the Buddha. About a century after Fa-Hien, another pilgrim Song-Yun came to India with the same object. After the illustrious Hiuen Tsang, there were other Chinese pilgrims like U-kong who travelled in the 8th century and I-Tsing, a great Sanskrit scholar, who studied Buddhism in Nalanda and later in Sumatra and wrote a book on Buddhist practices in India. "The accurate chronology of the Chinese writers gives their statements a peculiar value." Besides, Chinese historians from the time of Ssu-ma-chien (*cir.* 100 A.D.) throw much light upon the early annals of India. Buddhism was very popular in China in the 8th century and later. Indian Buddhist art profoundly influenced art in China.

Their Value

SECTION II. THE CHALUKYAS AND THE PALLAVAS IN THE 7TH CENTURY.

When Harsha was building up an empire in Northern India, a similar process was going on both in the Deccan and in South India. We shall learn in a later chapter of the detailed history of the Deccan and of the various dynasties and powers that ruled over it. After the powerful Andhra empire perished, various smaller dynasties set up their rule, until the Chalukyas rose about the middle of the 6th century A.D. This dynasty was destined to a long and glorious career; and its greatest member, Pulakesin II, who ruled from 608 to 642 A.D., was a contemporary of Harsha Vardhana. As has been already seen, Harsha brought under his own control Valabhi and the Gurjara king who was till then a feudatory of the Chalukya lord of the Deccan. He was however repulsed on the line of the Narmada when he attempted to break into the Deccan. Pulakesin was a very powerful monarch, who established his power firmly over Lata (Southern

The Rise of the Chalukyas in the Deccan

Struggle between Harsha and Pulakesin II Chalukya

Gujarat) and thus strengthened his northern frontier against Harsha. He also made himself respected, according to available evidence, by the rulers of Gujarat, Malwa and the Konkan. Again, he overran the territory of the Kadambas of Banavasi (North Canara) and frequently warred with the Pallava power of Kanchi.

The Rise of the Pallavas in South India

The Pallavas had succeeded in the 3rd and 4th centuries A.D. to the rule of the southern provinces of the Andhra Empire and the northern frontier of the ancient Chola kingdom; and their power now extended, under the rule of a famous line of kings, from the lower Krishna down to the Kaveri. The reigning Pallava sovereign was Narasimha Varman, the son of an equally great father named Mahendra Varman. These Pallavas may be said to have succeeded to the northern heritage of the Cholas, *viz*, the maintenance of their frontier in security against the northern enemy from the Deccan. Just as the Andhra power of the Deccan tried in the 2nd century A.D. to extend its authority southwards beyond the Krishna almost up to the banks of the Southern Pennar (as the ship-coins of the Andhras found in this region would indicate), so now the Chalukya power fought continuously against the Pallavas of Kanchi. Mahendra Varman Pallava (*cir.* 600—630 A.D.) checked a Chalukya invasion into his own territory. The Chalukyas however succeeded in permanently occupying the northern dominion of the Pallavas. Pulakesin conquered the Vengi country, between the lower Godavari and the lower Krishna and thus turned the flank of the Pallava dominion. (610—11 A.D.) He established his younger brother Kubja Vishnuvardhana as the viceroy of this new dominion; and the latter started the Eastern Chalukya Dynasty which ruled over the

The Chalukya-Pallava Struggle

The Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi (611—*cir.* 1070 A.D.)

Vengi-Rajahmundry region till late in the eleventh century. A Chalukya inscription praises Pulakesin as "having caused the splendour of the Pallavas who had opposed the rise of his power to be obscured by the dust of his army and to vanish behind the walls of Kanchipura."

The Triumph of Narasimha Varman Pallava

But Narasimha Varman, the son of Mahendra, who ruled from about 630 to 668 A.D. retrieved the power of the family, vanquished Pulakesin in various battles and claimed to have written the word victory as on a plate, on Pulakesin's back. He defeated the Chalukya in various battles in the Tamil country, carried the war into the enemy's territory and actually captured Vatapi (the capital of the Chalukyas, the present Badami, in the Bijapur District of the Bombay Presidency). He destroyed that city according to the testimony of incriptions.*

Subsequent Struggles of the Pallavas and the Chalukyas

Pulakesin was presumably put to death by the Pallava. The fortunes of the Chalukyas were only retrieved by Vikramaditya I, the son of Pulakesin, who succeeded to the Chalukya throne after an interregnum. Vikramaditya inflicted in 674 A D. a severe defeat upon the Pallavas and captured their strongly fortified capital Kanchi. Thus the Chalukya-Pallava struggle went on with varying fortunes, typifying the inevitable opposition between the dominant powers of the Deccan and South India. The Pallavas had in fact to be vigilant all along their northern frontier from Vaijayanti (Banavasi) near the west coast to Vengi in the east. The wedge of the Chalukya power of Vengi weakened the Pallava hold over their north-eastern frontier and made them more and more of a Tamil power of South India.

* The Kuram, the Kasakudi and the Udayendiram plates (*The South Indian Inscriptions.*) The Velurpalayam plates add that he took from the enemy the pillar of victory standing in the centre of Vatapi.

Mahendra Varman and Narasimha Varman

Mahendra Varman and Narasimha Varman tried hard to become masters of the Chola country in the heart of the Tamil land. They were frequently at war with the Chola and Pandya rulers ; Narasimha is supposed to have undertaken two expeditions to Ceylon ; and in later times after his defeat of Pulakesin, he was known as *Vatapi-konda* (conqueror of Vatapi.) These Pallavas gave an impetus to the progress of rock-cut architecture and opened up a new era in the history of Tamil civilisation. About their achievements we shall read in detail in a later chapter.

The Three Great Rulers of India about 640 A.D.

Thus about the year 640, three great sovereigns were ruling in India—Harsha in Hindustan, Pulakesin in the Deccan and Narasimha Varman in South India. Harsha's southern advance had been checked by Pulakesin ; the latter's incursions into South India were being resisted by the Pallavas ; and these last were trying to build up their hegemony over all the Tamil country. The Narmada-Vindhya frontier and the Krishna-Tungabhadra line were the dividing lines between the spheres of authority of the three powers. Within their respective limits each was suzerain over his territory and tried hard to suppress the centrifugal tendencies. Thus Harsha's authority extended from Valabhi and Sind to Assam (Kamarupa) which was ruled by Kumara Bhaskara Varma. The power of Pulakesin extended right across the Deccan from Lata to Vengi and from sea to sea. The Pallava sovereigns were easily the first power in Southern India.

Hiuen Tsang gives us a valuable picture of Pulakesin and records a most flattering account of the people, their prowess in war and honesty and of the strength of the king "who was obeyed with perfect submission by his many subjects." He also gives an account of the Pallava kingdom which he calls *Dravida* and of its capital, Kanchipuram. In fact the book of Hiuen Tsang is very valuable for the picture that it gives of the various kingdoms and kings of India in Harsha's time. It furnishes a very good idea of the political condition of India from Kashmir to Kanchi and from Valabhi to Assam, just about the middle of the 7th century A.D.

Hiuen Tsang's Picture of the Political Condition of the Age

CHAPTER XII.

MINOR DYNASTIES OF NORTHERN INDIA.

SECTION I. THE RISE OF THE RAJPUTS.

The Rajput Age

After the death of Harsha, there arose no great empire in India for a number of centuries; and the land came to be the prey of warring kingdoms and tribes. The history of the land resolved itself into constant feuds between rival Rajput and other dynasties. It is now that we hear of the Rajputs; and nearly all the kingdoms in this period were governed by families and clans which have been called Rajput. The dominance of the Rajput clans is conspicuous from the 7th and 8th centuries and lasted until the 12th century closed with the Muhammadan conquest of Hindustan. Even under the rule of the Muhammadans, many Rajput kingdoms continued to exist in independence and even in enjoyment of some power in the regions of Central India, Malwa, Rajputana and on the slopes of the Himalayas.

Meaning of 'Rajput'

As Dr. V. A. Smith says, "the term Rajput, as applied to a social group, has no concern with race, meaning descent or relationship by blood. It merely denotes a tribe, clan, sect or caste of warlike habits, the members of which claimed aristocratic rank and were treated by the Brahmans as representing the Kshatriyas of the old books."* From very ancient times, ruling clans, essentially similar to the Rajputs and calling themselves Kshatriyas, existed and were forming continuously new states. The traditions concerning these old time dynasties like the Guptas were broken; while some of the Rajput clans whose ruling families came into existence in this period are even now very much alive, with living traditions.

* *The Oxford History of India, 2nd Edition*, p. 172.

Tod, the historian of Rajasthan, and other early Western writers on India perceived that the Rajput clans were to a large extent foreign in origin and supposed that they were of Scythian descent. Later writers have confirmed this theory and pointed out that many of the Rajput clans had foreign blood in them.*

Origin of the Rajputs

We know how from about the 2nd century B C., there were continuous irruptions of foreign tribes into North-Western and Western India—the Bactrians, then the Saka-Pahlavas; after them the Kushanas and finally the numerous Huns of the latter part of the 5th and of the 6th centuries A D The names Śaka, Kushana and Huna, indicate only the "predominant elements of the invading swarms which included many various races." The tradition of descent from the Sakas and the Kushanas has been completely lost. The groups of tribes associated with the Huns made their principal settlements in Rajputana and the Punjab; and their most important element was that of the Gujars, still forming a tribe of the Punjab and having a district named after them.† At that time the Gujars were a powerful people known as the Gurjaras; and many Rajput dynasties like the famous Pratiharas were of Gurjara origin. There is also the allied tribe of the Jats who are now an agricultural people; and many of the Punjab Jats of the present day claim Rajput descent.

From Foreign Elements

The most important sections of these foreign tribes who settled in India came to be recognised in course of time as Kshatriyas and Hindus. When the tribes became Hinduised, the ruling families were readily recognised as Kshatriyas or Rajputs; and

Hinduisation of Foreigners

* *The Imperial Gazetteer of India.* Vol II, Ch. VIII; C. V. Vaidya: *History of Mediæval India*, Vol. II; *Early History of the Rajputs*', Ch. I; D. R. Bhandarkar on *the Gurjaras*, J. Bom. B. R A. S. (Vol XXI) and on *the Guhilots* (J. A. S B., 1909) and V. A. Smith on *the Gurjaras* (J. A. R S. 1909.)

† They have given their name also to the province of Gujarat and to Gujranwalla in the Punjab.

the rank and file of the people lost their old tribal organisation and developed into regular Hindu castes.

Most of these clans claimed descent from the ancient heroes of the epics ; and a few important ones claim to be descended from the sacrificial fire of Brahma in Mount Abu. * The Yadavas and the Rashtrakutas claimed to be descended from God Krishna. The Chalukyas and the Sessodias of Mewar, who are the proudest of the Rajput clans, claim descent from Rama. It is quite possible that there is a small sub-stratum of pure Kshatriya tribes of old among the Rajputs. The present accounts of their mythical origin were created in this manner. The bulk of the Rajputs in the north were probably the descendants of

The Principal Clans

* The bards and Brahmans at the courts of these princes invented for them many a myth and the glory of descent from Rama, Krishna and others. " The most poetical of these myths is the one which relates the origin of the four famous *Agnikula* tribes, a story which in its earliest form goes back to the eleventh century. When the Brahman Parasu Rama (Rama with the axe) had destroyed the ancient Kshatriyas, men were masterless, and impiety spread over the land, The gods repented them of the evil they had wrought and repaired to Mount Abu, the abode of the holy rishis, to create a new race of warriors who should rule the earth. Out of the cauldron of fire on Mount Abu, they brought forth the Parihars (Pratiharas), the Ponwars, the Solankis (Chalukyas), and the Chauhans (Chahumanas), most famous of the Rajput clans. Whether or not the legend is meant to disguise the substitution of a foreign for a native race of rulers, it is based upon one genuine fact.. Sacred mountains are common in Rajputana and Mount Abu was the holiest of them all. It was also the meeting place of the Agnikula tribes, three of which possessed territory in its immediate neighbourhood. The legend may serve to show how the true history of India is hidden under a thick veil of Brahmanic or bardic fiction."—Mr. J. Kennedy in *The Imperial Gazetteer of India ; The Indian Empire*, Vol II. p. 309. Probably the legend represents a rite of purification by fire by which the impurity of these foreign tribes was removed and they became fitted to enter the Hindu caste-system.

Legend of the Agnikula

foreign immigrants into Rajputana and the west in the 5th and the 6th centuries. Some of the principal clans in the Deccan and in Central India however, sprang apparently from aboriginal tribes like the Gonds, the Bhars, etc.* We may therefore say :—"Thus the Kshatriya or Rajput group of castes is at present essentially an occupational group composed of all clans following the Hindu ritual who actually undertook the work of government; consequently people of most diverse races were and are lumped together as Rajputs; and most of the great Rajput clans now in existence, in spite of their hoary pedigrees are descended either from foreign immigrants or from indigenous races such as the Gonds and Bhars."†

The Elements which have gone to make them

Thus the rise of the Rajputs dominated the entire history of Northern India for several centuries after Harsha. They took the place of the ancient Kshatriyas; and every tribe which exercised sovereign power or local rule even for a time joined itself to them. "They recognised no title-deeds except their swords and, were constantly seeking for new settlements. They are found everywhere from the Indus to Bihar. But

The Homogeneity of the Rajputs

* The Chandel tribe is closely associated with the Gonds and the Bhars. The Gahadwalas (Gaharwars) of Kanauj are similarly associated with the Bhars. The Bundelas and the Northern Rahtors are offshoots of the Gahadwalas; and the Rashtrakutas of the Deccan probably originated from some indigenous tribe.

† V. A. Smith: *Early History of India, 4th Ed.*, pp. 480-1. The writer adds that the conclusion is substantially true, although the evidence is of a kind difficult to grasp, and incapable of brief presentation. Mr. C. V. Vaidya (*History of Mediaeval Hindu India*, Ch. II *et seq.*) tries to support the statement that ethnology, tradition and probabilities, all point to the conclusion that the Rajput clans are pure Aryans and not descended from Scythic foreign tribes, and that even if some of them should be regarded as descended from the Gujars, they could not be classed as non-Aryan; and that the myth of the Agnikulas is an exploded one.

whatever might be their origin, all these clans acquired a certain homogeneity by constant inter-marriage and the adoption of common customs They were all distinguished by their clan feeling, their implicit obedience to their chief while claiming the equality of blood-relations, their sense of communal property. They married their daughters into a higher clan and took their wives from an equal or lower one. They had the same feeling regarding the honour of their women, the same customs of widow-burning and of the *johar*—the holocaust of females in a beleaguered fort. They all refused to perform the manual work of an agriculturist. It is this code of honour, these common customs, which made them homogeneous and unique."*

Their Customs

It was in the age of the Rajputs that Hinduism came to be still further popularised by means of great shrines and festivals, pilgrimages and the cult of the great rivers, by the recitation and exposition of the Epics and the Puranas. As the fruit of this popularisation, the foreign settlers and many aboriginal tribes were quickly absorbed into this Neo-Hinduism, with the result that castes and sects multiplied. Buddhism and Jainism declined; the former almost completely disappeared from the land by the end of this period.

Neo-Hinduism

The tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries—the age immediately preceding the occupation of the country by the Mussalmans—were the golden age of Rajput civilisation. Brahmans frequently held high offices under the kings who were despotic rulers and enjoyed a semi-divine respect paid to them by the people. The kings and their nobles maintained large retinues of mercenaries and troops of slaves They built strong forts for themselves in inacessible places and were

The Golden Age of the Rajputs

* J. Kennedy in *The Imperial Gazetteer*, Vol II, p. 309.

frequently at war with one another. The towns were well-fortified and strong enough to protect themselves from the oppressions of the chiefs; but the rural population was reduced to serfdom. Public and private wars were the fashion of the age. But in spite of these disturbances, there was considerable communication between different parts of the country; trade prospered; and poets, bards and learned men went to the courts of kings and were highly patronised by them. Temples were numerous; they were well-endowed by rulers who constituted themselves their special protectors and conducted festivals on a grand scale.

The Nobles and the People

The Rajput age was rich in art and literature; and the Rajput warriors brought back the ancient heroic times by constant quarrels among themselves and by often uniting in the great struggle against the Arabs and the Turks. The age produced great writers like Bhavabhuti, the author of *Malati-Madhava*; Rajasekhara; the poet-king Bhoja of Malwa; the historian Kalhana of Kashmir; and Chand, the prince of bards and author of the epic *Chand Raisa*. There flourished great centres of learning and monastic life like Dhara the capital of Malwa, and the Universities of Nalanda and Vikramasila in Bihar and Nuddea in Bengal. Splendid works of public utility were constructed; and the relics of some of them as well of the great temples and forts erected in the age are still to be seen in the regions of Malwa, Rajputana and Central India. Many were destroyed by the Muhammadan invaders; and only a few survive.

Learning and Art

SECTION II.—THE CHIEF RAJPUT KINGDOMS.

The Frontier Kingdoms.

Of the kingdoms on the frontiers, Kashmir, Nepal and Assam were the most important. The Valley of Kashmir had been included in the Mauryan Empire in the time of Asoka and formed part of the Kushan Empire. During the Rajput period Kashmir developed into a fair-sized kingdom and was occasionally able to influence even distant regions. The first dynasty to be noted was the Karkota line founded by Durlabhavardhana in the reign of Harsha. It was possibly this king that honoured Hiuen Tsang during his stay in the valley. Lalitaditya (*cir.* A. D. 725—752) greatly extended his power, defeated the powerful Yasovarman, king of Kanauj, and the neighbouring Tibetans and Turks and above all, built the famous Temple of Martanda. He sent an embassy to China and brought a considerable part of the Punjab under his sway. His grandson Jayapida was another important ruler. He was an avaricious tyrant. Another ruler, Avantivarman (*cir.* 855—883 A. D.) is noted for the useful irrigation works that he constructed. He and his son who was a noted warrior and builder were the two prominent rulers of the short-lived Utpala Dynasty (833—939 A. D.)

I. Kashmir

Its Dynasties

Kalhana's Rajatarangini

Later rulers of Kashmir were marked in many cases by tyranny. The kingdom was attacked by Mahmud of Ghazni, the famous invader, but preserved its independence. The *Rajatarangini** of Kalhana written in the 12th century is our chief source of information for Kashmir history; and it gives a long

* Translated with Introduction and Notes, in 2 volumes, by M. A. Stein (Constable, 1900). *The Kashmir Chronicle* is "the nearest approach to a work of regular history in extant Sanskrit literature."

list of kings and queens "who gloried in shameless lust, fiendish cruelty and pitiless misrule." The kingdom continued in its existence till 1339 when it was overthrown by a Persian adventurer who started Muhammadan rule, under which Islam gradually spread.

II. Nepal

Nepal extends along the lower Himalayas from Sikkim to the Kumaon District. But the name Nepal should be properly applied only to a small valley which encloses Kathmandu and other chief towns. The kingdom is mentioned in Samudragupta's Allahabad Inscription as a tributary state. According to tradition it was under the control of Asoka, who is supposed to have founded a town. In the time of Harsha, Nepal was ruled by one Amsuvarman who

Amsuvarman

founded the Thakuri dynasty and maintained a close connection both with Kanauj and with Tibet which was then a very powerful state under Srong-tsan-Gampo. Amsuvarman died about 642 A. D.; nothing is known about his successors except that Nepal continued to be dependent on Tibet till about the beginning of the 8th century A. D. A new Nepalese era was started in 879 A. D.; this date possibly marked the starting of a dynasty.

Conquest by the Gurkhas

Various petty dynasties continued to rule in independence and in mutual strife up to 1768 when the Gurkhas, a Khattri tribe who originally came from Oudh, conquered the land and began a strong dynasty. Buddhism was introduced into the country by Asoka, but it soon degenerated, being corrupted by Tantric ideas and diluted by the orthodox Hindu cult of Siva.

III. Assam

Assam, known as Kamarupa, comprised the valleys of the Brahmaputra and the Surma rivers with the intervening hills. It had been settled by races of Mongoloid origin. It was an outlying tributary kingdom of Samudragupta

and was under the rule of King Kumara Bhaskaravarman, when Harsha reigned in Kanauj. Kumara entertained the Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen Tsang, before the latter went to Harsha's court. Nothing is known about his successors, except that Assam was conquered by the Pala kings of Bengal and formed for a time a portion of their dominions.

King Kumara

The Shan tribe of the Ahoms occupied the land early in the 13th century.* They gave their name to the land and began their rule which lasted in the inner parts till the British occupation of the country (1825). Buddhism which spread in the land was soon debased by the devil-worship of the aboriginal tribes like the Kochches and further diluted by the Tantric ideas of Mediæval Bengal. The shrine of Kamakshya near Gauhati is the centre of the Sakti-worship, characteristic of Tantricism.

The Ahoms

Coming to the great Rajput powers which flourished in the Indo-Gangetic basin we have the Palas and the Senas of Bengal, the Gurjara-Pratiharas and after them the Rahtors at Kanauj, the Chauhans of Ajmere, the Paramaras of Malwa, the Solankis of Gujarat, the Chandels of Bundelkhand and the Kalachuris of Chedi, besides several smaller dynasties.

The Kingdoms of the Interior

Kanauj was throughout this period considered the premier city of India. From the time of Harsha, down to the conquests of Muhammad Ghori, Kanauj was the acknowledged imperial capital of Hindustan.† It was always the centre of attraction for

I. Kanauj, the Imperial City

* L. W. Shakespear: *History of Upper Assam, Upper Burmah and North-Eastern Frontier* (1914), Ch. II & VII. Kamarupa is according to tradition the ancient home of Narakasura who erected the temple of Kamakshya and whose son Bhagadatta fought for the Kauravas in the Mahabharata war (*vide* Gait's *History of Assam.*)

† "The halo of the Empire of Harsha hovered long over the city and induced each successive aspirant to imperial power to establish his dynasty there."—C. V. Vaidya's *History of Mediæval Hindu India*, Vol 1, p. 27. See also Elliot and Dowson: *History of India as told by its own Historians*, Vol. I (1807).

ambitious rulers. Its wealth and grandeur are well testified to by the Arab historians and travellers of the time who always spoke of it as the "capital of Hind." It occupied the position that Delhi came to enjoy under Muhammadan rule and Pataliputra enjoyed under the Mauryas and the Guptas.

Yasovarman

The glory of Kanauj under Harsha is described by Hiuen Tsang. After the confusion that followed the death of Harsha, Kanauj again became famous under the rule of Yasovarman (*cir.* 730 A. D.) who was so powerful as to send an embassy to China and patronised Bhavabhuti, the renowned author of *Malati-Madhava.* His successors were weak and they were hemmed into insignificance by the rulers of Kashmir and Bengal pressing on them from either side.

The Gurjara Pratiharas

About 816 A.D. Nagabhatta of the Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty which was ruling at Bhinmal in Rajputana, took possession of Kanauj which thus became the Gurjara capital. This Gurjara dynasty attained the height of its power under Mihira-Bhoja (840-890 A.D.) and Mahendrapala (890-908 A D.) Their dominions

Mihira-Bhoja and Mahendrapala (840—908 A.D.)

were extensive including the greater part of the Punjab, Rajputana, Oudh and Central India. Mihira-Bhoja kept up bitter hostilities against the aggressive Rashtrakuta power of the Deccan and attempted to conquer Gujarat. He successfully invaded Bengal and probably also kept the rising Chandel kingdom of Jejakabhukti (Bundelkhand) under check. His son Mahendrapala ruled over an extensive dominion stretching from the Punjab to Bihar; and he was the patron of the celebrated poet Rajasekhara.

The Decline of the Gurjaras

The kingdom began to decline under his son; and in 916 A.D. Kanauj was captured by the powerful Rashtrakuta king, being recovered only with the aid of the Chandels who were gradually becoming more powerful. Gradually the Gurjara power broke up. In 1019 it submitted to the Muslim invader, Mahmud of Ghazni, who took the seven forts of the city in a single day and returned with a large booty. Rajyapala, the coward Gurjara king, abandoned Kanauj and retired to Bari on the other side of the Ganges. The invader repeated his raid the next year and on his way to the Chandel kingdom, captured Bari, the new capital.

Mahmud of Ghazni sacks Kanauj

The Gahadvalas (or Gaharwars) (1090 A.D.)

The Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty disappeared; and Kanauj was occupied a little time before 1090 A.D. by Chandra Deva, of the Gahadvala clan who had already planted his dominion over Benares and Ayodhya. This dynasty subsequently known as the Rahtor dynasty,* lasted for a little more than a century. Govindachandra (1114-1155 A.D.), the grandson of the founder, enjoyed a long reign and restored to a large degree the glory and power of Kanauj.† His grandson was Jaichandra, famous in song and story as the deadly rival of

Govindachandra and Jaichandra

* The claim was made by the Rahtor Chiefs of Jodhpur to be descended from Raja Jaichandra, the last Gahadvala king.

† Govindachandra is supposed to have fought with the Mussalmans of the Punjab and levied a special tax called *Turushka-Danda* in order to get money for his frequent wars with the Muhammadans who had established themselves firmly in the Punjab in the time of Mahmud of Ghazni. He also kept an efficient force of cavalry which alone could check the sudden and surprising movements of the Mussalmans who were very good horsemen and who were more than a match for the slow-moving Indian elephants and foot-soldiers. (C V. Vaidya : *History of Mediæval Hindu India*, *Vol* II, p. 218; and R. D. Banerjea : *History of India* (1914), p. 141.)

Prithvi Raja of Delhi. He was also a powerful ruler; and his enmity to Prithvi Raja was so great that he is supposed to have invited Muhammad Ghori to destroy his rival and thus brought about his own ultimate destruction as well. Some historians say that there is no evidence to hold that Jaichandra ever called in the foreign foe. It may be that he did not assist Prithvi Raja; but he certainly fought valiantly against Ghori when the latter advanced against Kanauj and drowned himself in the Ganges to escape capture by the enemy (1194 A.D.)* The independence of Kanauj disappeared. Jaichandra's sons had to fly before the Muslim enemy; and the whole *Doab* down to Benares was lost to the Hindus.

II. The Chauhans of Ajmer

The Chauhans (Chahumanas) had been for long ruling the small principality of Sambhar (*Sakambari*) in Rajputana to which Ajmer was also joined. Visala Deva (or Vigraha Raja), who ruled about the middle of the 12th century, was a great warrior, who conquered Delhi; he was a poet as well as a patron of poets.

Visala Deva

He is supposed to have written a drama based on the well-known *Kiratarjuniya* epic and to have built a tank and a Sanskrit college at Ajmer, the latter being later converted into a mosque by the Muhammadans.

Prithvi Raja

The next important ruler was his nephew Prithvi Raja,† the last of the line, whose chivalrous exploits are given in great detail in the *Rasa* composed by a minstrel, Chand Bhat, who was a contemporary of the king himself. We also get to know something of the king

* See for evidence of Jaichandra's share in the guilt of bringing in the Muhammadans, Chapters VIII and XXI of Book VII of C. V. Vaidya's *History of Mediæval Hindu India*, Vol. III: *The Downfall of Hindu India*.

† Known also as Rai Pithora and Prithiraj. The dates of his birth and accession are uncertain.

from two other historical poems recently discovered He is supposed to have fought with the most powerful Hindu kings of his time (Bhima Deva Chalukya of Gujarat, Paramardi Chandel and Jaichandra of Kanauj) and emerged victorious. The whole account of Chand is full of heroic and daring incidents, many of which may not be true. Prithvi Raja had to compete for the imperial dignity of *Chakravarthin* with Jaichandra whose grandfather Govindachandra had been very powerful and whose father lost that position to Visala Deva of Ajmer. Visala Deva's annexation of Delhi* àdded to the power of the Chauhans; and the heir of Visala Deva naturally fought with the grandson of Govindachandra. Chand makes a poetical story of the marriage of Prithvi Raja with the daughter of Jaichandra, who was probably carried off in a sudden raid by her lover. The contest between Prithvi Raja and Jaichandra weakened their power to resist Muhammad Ghori and finally led to the destruction of both. In his first encounter with the hosts of Muhammad Ghori, Prithvi Raja got a victory (of Talwari, also called Tirauri, 1191 A.D.) and forced the enemy to retire beyond the Indùs. In the next year he encountered the Sultan on the same field, was defeated, taken prisoner and executed.

Prithvi's End

Ajmer was sacked; and in 1193 Delhi fell into the hands of the Mussalmans. With the fall of Prithvi Raja and Jaichandra followed by the Mussalman occupation of Benares, the epoch of Hindu independence may be said to have closed for Northern India.

* Delhi, situated near the ancient Indraprastha, was in reality founded by Anangapala Tomara about the middle of the 11th century who built a fort called the Lalkot beside the town. The ancient iron-pillar is said to have been brought by Anangapala from Muttra (1052 A.D.) As we saw the Chahumanas conquered it about a century later; Prithvi Rai is said to have extended the city and built a wall round it. When Kutb-ud-din, the Viceroy of Ghori, occupied it, he threw down the Hindu and Jain temples and utilised them for building a mosque. The original name of the city seems to have been *Dhillika*, according to inscriptions.

III. The Chandels of Jejakabhukti

The Chandels of Jejakabhukti (the province of Jejaka, the region between the Jumna and the Narmada) began their rule in the 9th century; and they were a long-lived dynasty. They were probably Hinduised Gonds and originally feudatories of the Pratiharas.

Yasovarman

Yasovarman (925–950 A.D.), the first great king of the line, conquered the famous hill-fort of Kalanjar from the neighbouring Kalachuris, defeated the already weakened king of Kanauj and brought from that city a sacred image of Vishnu which he housed in a beautiful temple at Khajuraho. The Chandel kings were in fact great builders; and the whole of Bundelkhand is strewn with the remains of their lofty hill-forts, stately temples and embanked lakes.

Dhanga and Ganda

Yasovarman's son Dhanga (950–999 A.D.) was the greatest ruler of the line and fought against Sabuktigin, the father of Mahmud of Ghazni, along with other Rajput princes. His son Ganda (999–1025 A.D.) joined the renewed Rajput confederacy against Sultan Mahmud, but had to surrender the strong fortress of Kalanjar to the invader (1023).

Kirtivarman

After a short eclipse the Chandel power was revived by Kirtivarman (1049–1100) who secured a victory over the rival Chedi king and was the patron of the curious play—*Prabhoda Chandrodaya* of Krishna Misra, a drama based on Vedanta philosophy—which immortalised the king's victory and was acted before him in 1065 A.D. The last Chandel king was Parmardi or Parmal who was defeated by Prithvi Raja in 1182 and lost Kalanjar to Kutb-ud-din, the viceroy of Ghori, in 1203. After Parmardi the dynasty declined; and we find only local chiefs of the Chandel clan till about the 16th century.

V. The Kalachuris of Chedi

The Kalachuri or Haihaya Rajas of Chedi (roughly identical with the present Central Provinces) were related to the Chandels. They claimed to be an ancient Kshatriya clan of the Narmada valley and used their own era (commencing in 248 A.D.). They came to prominence about the middle of the 9th century; and their greatest kings were Gangeya Deva (*cir.* 1015–1040 A.D.) who conquered the neighbouring kingdoms and aimed at an imperial status; and his son Karna Deva (*cir.* 1040–70 A.D.) who warred with the Palas of Bengal and defeated Bhoja of Malwa but was finally crushed by the Chandel Raja. The dynasty became insignificant about the close of the 12th century, being supplanted by the Baghels of Rewa and defeated by the advancing Mussalmans.

V. The Paramaras of Malwa

The Paramaras (Pawars) of Malwa were an *Agnikula* clan which founded its power near Mount Abu early in the 9th century. The seventh of the line was Vakpati or Munja Raja (973–997) who was a learned man and a patron of poets and was withal warlike, He was frequently fighting with his southern neighbour, the Chalukya of the Deccan. Malwa rose to still greater glory and renown in the reign of Bhoja (1018–1060 A.D.) who was a greater author and patron of learning than his uncle Munja and who "in real history typified the best Kshatriya of Bharatavarsha......like Rama and Yudishthira of legendary days or Vikrama and Hala of later legends." He wrote works on astronomy, poetics, grammar, etc., and built besides a large lake, a great college for Sanskrit studies at his capital Dhara, in which Sanskrit aphorisms on various subjects were inscribed on the stones. He waged tough fights with his neighbours, the Chedis, the rulers of Gujarat and even the Mussalmans. Malwa was extremely

Munja

Bhoja

prosperous under him ; he was called *Kaviraja* and *Malava-Chakravartin* and may be looked upon as one of the greatest monarchs of Hindu India.* He succumbed in a fight with the united forces of Gujarat and Chedi. His successors were weak and the dynasty lasted on as an insignificant power until the beginning of the 13th century. Other clans came to rule in Malwa; and the Mussalmans gradually occupied the country until the last Hindu prince was extinguished by a Mussalman dynasty about 1401.

VI. Gujarat

(*a*) The Chavadas of Anhilwara

After the kingdom of Valabhi fell, a dynasty known as the Chavadas established its rule in North Gujarat at Patan and ruled for some time, apparently in subjection to Kanauj. Vanaraj, its first important ruler, laid the foundation of Anhilwara (Anahillapura) about 746 A.D. This town later became the capital of the powerful dynasty of the Solankis. Vanaraja's successors ruled till about 961 A.D. when the kingdom was seized by Mularaja who founded the Solanki dynasty.

(*b*) The Solankis

The history of the Solanki dynasty has been well told in *The Bombay Gazetteer*† from Jain records and inscriptions. The dynasty was not the same as the Chalukyas of the Deccan ; and it was only from about the middle of the 12th century that inscriptions begin to speak of the kingdom as *Gurjarabhumi.* When Albiruni, the Arab astronomer, wrote about India, he gave the name Gujarat to the territory about Jaipur in Rajputana. These Solankis, though they did not call themselves Gurjaras, are styled so in other records. They were Saivas, though very generous towards the Jains.

Mularaja (961–996 A.D.) had to fight vigorously with

* Chap. IV, Book VII of Vol. III of C. V. Vaidya's *History of Mediæval Hindu India.*

† Vol. I, Part II and also Chap. VII of Book VII of C. V. Vaidya.

his neighbours in Rajputana, Southern Gujarat and Sind.

Mularaja

He built a Siva temple at his capital and invited learned Brahmans from different parts and settled them in his kingdom. The next important ruler was Bhima I (1022-1064 A.D.) who was a contemporary of King Bhoja of

Bhima

Malwa and King Karna of Chedi and frequently fought with them. It was in the beginning of his, reign that Mahmud of Ghazni made his famous raid on Somnath; but he left the kingdom stronger than when he began his rule.

Siddharaja

Jayasimha Siddharaja (1093-1143 A.D.) was the most powerful king of the line. He built numerous temples, defeated some Mlechchas who were possibly foreign invaders from Sind, patronised many learned men, the greatest of whom was Hemachandra, the Jain Pandit, and became the hero of numerous legends.

Kumarapala

The last important king was Kumarapala (1143-1173 A.D.) who ruled justly and wisely and greatly respected the Jain religion and its votaries. Like his predecessors he was a great builder and warrior—being credited with rebuilding (or at least completing the rebuilding) of Somnath. In his later years he is said to have actually become a Jaina, enforcing vigorously the doctrine of *Ahimsa.* His successors were not strong; but they contrived to push back Muhammad Ghori (*cir.* 1178 A.D.) and thus saved Gujarat from Muhammadan conquest for more

Final Muslim Conquest of Gujarat

than a century. Kutb-ud-din's advance on Gujarat was futile (1196). But the dynasty steadily declined and was finally overwhelmed by Alauddin's lieutenants in 1298. Unquestionably the Solankis were a notable line; and almost all the kings were able and vigorous kings.

Among the numerous dynasties that rose up in Rajputana in this epoch were the Guhilots (Sessodias) of Mewar, the foremost in dignity of the present-day Rajput clans and boasting of an unbroken descent from the Solar Race. Bappa Rawal is the reputed founder of this illustrious family who made use of the Bhil tribes and repulsed an Arab invasion (*cir.* 730 A.D.) Curious stories are told of his birth and heroic feats. His son Guhila captured Chitor (in Rajputana) which remained their capital for 8 centuries, until the reign of Akbar. It is only from the 13th century that the dynasty became very prominent. You will hear of the great achievements of the rulers of this line in the Muhammadan period. The Kachchwahas of modern Jaipur who built the fort of Gwalior in the 9th century, the Tomaras of Delhi and other Rajput clans need no more than a passing mention.

VII. The Guhilots of Mewar

After Harsha's time Bengal remained obscure for some decades till Adisura, a local Raja of Gaur and its neighbourhood revived orthodox Hinduism by importing from Kanauj five Brahman and five Kayastha families to whom tradition assigns the origin of many notable Bengali families of to-day. Sometime after the half-mythical Adisura, when the country had once more lapsed into confusion, one Gopala arose (*cir.* 730–40 A.D.) and established his power over West Bengal and South Bihar. He was a pious Bauddha and founded a great monastery at Uddantapura, near the town of Bihar, which became the capital of his successors. His successor Dharmapala (flourished *cir.* 800 A.D.) had a long and victorious career and spread his power from Kanauj to the Vindhyas. He founded the famous monastery and University of Vikramasila on the

VIII. The Palas and the Senas

Adisura

Gopala

banks of the Ganges. Devapala (*cir.* 850 A.D.) was the most powerful member of the dynasty and a zealous patron of Buddhism. His general, Lavasena, conquered Assam in the east and Kalinga in the south.

Dharmapala and Devapala

Mahipala, the ninth of the line (*cir.* 978–1030 A.D.) recovered the power of the dynasty which was overthrown for a time by an irruption of hill-men. He sent Buddhist missionaries to Tibet and was the potent agent for the spread of Buddhism in that country. He however suffered a defeat at the hands of the Cholas from the distant south who pushed on under their king Rajendra Gangaikonda beyond Kalinga into the lower Gangetic valley about 1023 A.D. The successors of Mahipala were weak and troubled by rebellions until Ramapala (*cir.* 1084–1130 A.D.) conquered Mithila (in North Bihar) and Assam and greatly encouraged the declining Buddhism of the country. After Ramapala the dynasty declined, till Muhammad, the son of Bakhtyar Khilji, stormed the town of Bihar (1197 A.D.), overthrew the Palas and destroyed the small remaining vestiges of Buddhism along with them.

Mahipala

Mussalman overthrow of the Palas

The Pala dynasty was a long-lived one and also fairly powerful. The reigns of Dharmapala and Devapala formed a period of marked intellectual activity in literature, sculpture, painting, etc. The kings dug numerous tanks and channels and generously patronised learned men and monasteries.* Very few monuments of the Pala times have survived.

Pala Culture

* *The Palas of Bengal*, by R. D. Banerji in *The Memoirs of the A. S. Bengal*, Vol. V.

The Senas

The Senas were originally a dynasty from the Deccan who planted their power in Orissa about 1050 A.D. Vijayasena, the grandson of the founder, made himself an independent sovereign about the close of the 11th century. He wrested a large part of Bengal from the declining Palas and enjoyed a long reign. Ballal Sen, his son and successor, purified Hinduism, reorganised the caste-system and introduced the practice of Kulinism (*i.e.*, hypergamy) among Brahmans and the higher castes and sent Brahman missionaries to Magadha, Arakan and other regions.

Ballal Sen

Lakshman Sen

Ballal Sen was succeeded about 1119 A.D. by Lakshman Sen, who ruled at Nuddea to the north of Calcutta for a very long time, until his power was destroyed by the Muhammadan invaders (1199 A. D.) All the Senas were Brahmanical Hindus and bitterly opposed to the Buddhist Palas. But both the Hinduism of the Senas and the Buddhism of the Palas were debased by Tantric ideas. With the disappearance of the Palas the last vestiges of organised Buddhism in India disappeared; those monks who escaped the Mussalman sword fled to Tibet, Nepal and Southern India (?). The Senas were patrons of culture; Jayadeva, the author of *Gita Govinda*, is supposed to have lived at the court of Ballal Sen,

Mussalman Conquest

Rajput Failure before Mussalman Invasions

Thus by 1200, Rajput independence seems to have been lost everywhere except in the interior of Rajputana and Malwa and in Gujarat and the Deccan. The reason why the Rajputs were not able to stem the tide of foreign conquest is to be mainly sought in the defects of their social organisation and military equipment. These and other factors which contributed to their downfall, we shall proceed to study when we come to the epoch of Mussalman conquest,

CHAPTER XIII.

THE KINGDOMS OF THE DECCAN TO 1300 A.D.

SECTION I.

THE KADAMBAS, THE GANGAS AND THE EARLY CHALUKYAS.

The term 'Deccan'

The word 'Deccan' comes from the Sanskrit 'Dakshina' and connotes in its wider sense all the tract of land south of the Narmada. In a restricted sense the Deccan includes the whole of Maharashtra, the Canarese districts of the Bombay Presidency and the Nizam's Dominions and the tract occupied by the Telugu-speaking people, now called the Andhras. Though the tableland of the Deccan is considered by geologists to be the oldest portion of India, its history has till very recently remained obscure We owe it primarily to two oriental scholars, Dr. Sir R. G. Bhandarkar and Dr. Fleet for elucidating the main facts of Early Deccan History.

Early Notices of the Deccan

The Aryans who, in the earliest of times, spread over the whole of North India had very little knowledge of South India. But in the *Aitareya Brahmana*, a reference is made to the Andhras, the Pulindas and the Sabaras, tribes living in the regions south of the Vindhya Mountains. Panini, the Sanskrit grammarian, makes little mention of towns or places in the Deccan, thus warranting the conclusion that in his time* the regions south of the Vindhyas were little known to the Aryans. Tradition has it that very early the Sage Agastya led a Brahman migra-

* The date of Panini has been differently assigned by scholars ranging from the 9th to 7th century before Christ.

tion to the extreme south of India.* Whatever value may be attached to this tradition, it is certain that in the 4th century B.C. most parts of the Deccan and the extreme south of India were known to the people of the North ; for Katyayana (4th century B.C.) in his *Vartikas* or aphorisms mentions the Pandya and the Chola kingdoms. The 'Buddhist literature of the period does not mention anything beyond Dandaka lying south of Asmaka on the Godavari.'†

Deccan in the time of the Mauryas

More definite is our knowledge regarding the relationship between North India and the Deccan after the establishment of the Mauryan rule. Mamulanar, a member of the famous Madura Academy (Tamil Sangham) of about the second century A.D., refers familiarly to the vast riches of the Nandas. According to Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, a Mauryan invasion of the extreme south of India did actually take place.‡ The in-

* *Vide* D. R Bhandarkar: *Carmichael Lectures* (1918) Calcutta University, pp. 18–20.

† Dr. S. K. Aiyangar: *Some Contributions of South India to Indian Culture*, p 4.

Bhandarkar on Early Aryan Migration.

A careful examination of all available evidence from literature led Dr. Sir R. G. Bhandarkar to arrive at the following conclusion in regard to Aryan knowledge of the Deccan : " The Indian Aryas had thus no knowledge of Southern India previous to the seventh century before Christ ; they had gone as far as the Northern Circars by the eastern route, but no farther ; and the countries directly to the south of the Vindhyas they were not familiar with. About that time, however, they must have begun to penetrate still further, since they had already settled in or had communication with the countries on the northern skirts of the Vindhya and Kalinga, and first settled in Vidarbha or Berar, approaching it still, it would appear, by the eastern route ; but in the course of some time more they crossed the Vindhya and settled in Dandakaranya along the banks of the Godavary, that is, in Maharashtra or the Deccan Before 350 B C. they had become familiar with the whole country down to Tanjore and Madura." (*Bombay Gazetteer*, Vol. I, Part II, p. 141.)

‡ Dr. S. K. Aiyangar : *Beginnings of South Indian History*, Chapter II.

scriptions of the Asokan period clearly establish the fact that the whole of the Deccan and South India as far as Madras was subject to Mauryan control. We have already seen that after the death of Asoka, the Kalingas and the Andhras proclaimed their independence. A major portion of the Deccan became included in the Andhra Empire. When that empire fell in the beginning of the 3rd century A D., there was a general scramble for political power and territorial sovereignty on the part of its military governors. In the result the Chutus and the Nagas, the so-called Andhrabhrityas, established a vigorous though short rule in the various parts of the Deccan. A marriage alliance between the daughter of the powerful Chutu chieftain of Banavasi, and a Pallava prince led to the acquisition by the latter of a good portion of what was once the southern viceroyalty of the Andhra state. In the meanwhile taking advantage of the general confusion that prevailed, foreign races such as the Abhiras established themselves in the western portion of the Deccan.

Review of Early History

The Abhiras were possibly a North Indian race of pastoral habits; and according to the testimony of the *Vayu Purana,* they were in power in the Deccan for about seventy years. Much is not known about them; but if traditions about them are to be believed, their rule was confined to the Nasik and Khandesh districts of the Bombay Presidency.

The Abhiras

The power that successfully wrested political control from the various ruling princes of the Deccan after the Abhiras would appear to be the Rashtrakutas who were predominant in the country from remote times. These were known by various names such as Rathis, Bhojas and Rashtrikas.*

The Rashtrakutas

* Dr. Sir R. G. Bhandarkar considers them as tribes of Kshatriyas who resumed their independence after the extinction of the Kshatrapa and the Andhrabhritya dynasties. "From about the end of the third to the beginning of the sixth century, therefore, the Deccan was ruled over by princes of the Rashtrakuta family."—(*Bombay Gazetteer*, Vol. I, Part II p. 178. Other views of their origin are given later in this chapter.

About the middle of the sixth century A.D. the power of the Rashtrakutas in the Deccan was eclipsed by a new dynasty—that of the Chalukyas who had a longer and a more glorious career than any other dynasty. Indeed for all practical purposes the history of the Deccan, as Dr. V. A. Smith truly observed, begins with the Chalukyas. Before we read their history, a brief notice of two other dynasties that played a conspicuous part in the affairs of the Deccan, sometimes as independent powers, but more often than not as satellites of more powerful rulers, is necessary. These were the Kadambas and the Gangas.

The Chalukyas

The Kadambas, it will be interesting to note, were a family of Brahmans, so called because they always planted the Kadamba-tree (*Nauclea Cadamba*) opposite to their houses and carefully tended it. Their dominions embraced all the west of Mysore and the two Kanara districts. Their original capital was at Banavasi, the Vaijayanti of the records, mentioned by Ptolemy, but many of their grants were issued from other places also. Tradition ascribes the foundation of the dynasty to one Trilochana Kadamba; but the famous Talgunda inscription, (first brought to light by Lewis Rice) supplies us with interesting information both in regard to the founder of the dynasty and the circumstances of the formation of Kadamba power.*

The Kadambas

* "There was a family of Brahmans, Haritiputras, and born in the Manavya *gotra*, who always planted the *kadamba-tree* in the neighbourhood of their houses and carefully tended it. From this the family came to be known as the Kadamba family And in it there was born a certain Mayurasarman who went with his preceptor Virasarman to the city of the Pallavas—having a desire to master, in a very brief time, the whole of the sacred writings that are designated by the term *pravachana*. He was interrupted, in his studies, by a great commotion in the stables of the Pallavas. And, enraged at this, he set himself to show that, even in the Kali age, Brahmans could be as powerful as the members of the warrior

Mayurasarman Founder of the Kadamba Power

Their Obscure History.

The dates of many kings of this line are not clearly known. Some of the Kadamba rulers such as Mrigesavarman and Ravivarman were great patrons of Jainism. The Kadambas had powerful enemies in their neighbours, the Pallavas and the Gangas. They had frequently to contend against the neighbouring Naga chieftains also. They ceased to exist as an independent power by about 566 A.D. when they were conquered by the Early Chalukyas. Subsequently they continued to exist for some centuries as small feudatory chiefs.

The Gangas

The Gangas ruled over a greater part of the Mysore country and of the Kaveri river-basin from the 2nd century A.D. Another branch of the line, known as the Eastern Gangas, ruled in Kalinga, extending over the modern Orissa, and the Ganjam and Vizagapatam districts. The inscriptions of the Eastern Gangas are all late, falling in the 6th and 7th centuries A.D. In all likelihood the Eastern Gangas represent a revival of the Ganga power in the north-east of the Madras Presidency.

Their Religious Creed.

Inscriptions of the Mysore country tell us how the Ganga kingdom of Mysore came to be established. They indicate that the Gangas were a northern power and the kingdom was established under Jain auspices. Indeed most of the Western Gangas were staunch supporters of Jainism. The Ganga kingdom lasted down to *cir.* 1000 A.D.

and regal caste. He applied himself to war, conquered the guardians of the frontier of the Pallava kings and established himself in a forest, difficult of access, in front of Sriparvata mountain and levied taxes from the Banas and other kings. The kings of Kanchi, *i.e.*, the Pallavas, sought to overthrow him and attacked him in many battles. But with the "very ocean of an army," that he had got together, he destroyed their forces and brought them low. And at last, the Pallava kings, recognising his prowess and ancestry, thought it better to make friends with him; and they conferred on him the *pattabandha* or binding on the fillet of sovereignty and gave him a territory on the shore of the western ocean, with a promise that it should be free from invasion."

It was swept away by the Cholas early in the 11th century A. D., and the land made a province of the Chola Empire.

Chalukyas—Why so called

The Chalukyas were the dominant power in the Deccan from the fifth to the eighth centuries and then again from the latter part of the tenth to the twelfth centuries. Their origin and early history are elucidated in many inscriptions.*

Jayasimha and his Successors

The first prince of the line was Jayasimha, a military adventurer, who wrested Maharashtra from its native rulers, the Rashtrakutas. The next important reign was that of his grandson Pulakesin I, who ascended the throne about 550 A.D. A ruler of great eminence, he added much to the territories of the Chalukyas. He made Vatapi (Badami), in the Bijapur district of the Bombay Presidency, his capital and assumed the titles of *Prithivi Vallabha* (lover of earth) and *Satyasraya* (supporter of truth). He adorned his capital with many temples and prepared in every way for the great part the dynasty played later on. About 567 A.D. he was succeeded by his son Kirtivarman who during a reign of 24 years added Northern Konkan and Northern Canara to his dominions. When he died in 591 A.D., he left a considerably expanded kingdom to be looked after by a brother Mangalisa during the minority of his eldest son, the future Pulakesin II. This Mangalisa was a great soldier and is

* According to one of these, while God Brahmadeva was engaged in his devotions, Indra saw him and bewailed that no man performed sacrificial rites or offered oblations to gods. This roused the wrath of Brahmadeva who angrily looked at his *Chuluka* or the hollowed palm of his hand, from which there sprang a warrior who was to establish the Dharma, the progenitor of the Chalukya race. In his family were born sometime afterwards two heroes Harita and Manavya who brought glory to the race. This and many other graceful legends about the race agree in making Ayodhya the original seat of the dynasty. Vishnu was the patron deity of the race and consequently the emblem of the wild boar *Varaha* was displayed on their banner.

said to have carried his arms to both the eastern and the western seas. He, however, made the mistake of trying to secure the crown to his son, which roused the suspicions of Pulakesin II. In the course of the struggle that ensued between the uncle and the nephew, Mangalisa was defeated and slain.

Pulakesin II—His Conquests

The name of Pulakesin, the greatest member of the dynasty, was one dreaded by all the kings of the Deccan and South India. From 611 to 634 A.D. he was engaged in subduing the whole of the Deccan gaining for himself the position of Lord Paramount. His first task was to reduce the Rashtrakutas who had raised their heads in the hope of regaining their rule and power. He next attacked the Kadambas and reduced their capital Banavasi. Fearful of their fate, the Ganga king and the Alupas became the allies of Pulakesin. The Mauryas of the Konkan, the kings of Lata, Malwa and Gurjara were next subdued. But none of these victories brought greater honour to Pulakesin than his brave stand against Emperor Harsha who, as has been stated already, was repulsed on the line of the Narmada.

The Founding of the Eastern Chalukya Line

Pulakesin's conquests were not confined to the Deccan proper. He defeated the Pallavas and attacked their capital Kanchi. He also took possession of the Vengi country, the tract of land between the lower Kistna and the Godavari and handed it over to his brother Kubja Vishnuvardhana who, becoming independent in 615 A.D., founded a new line—the Eastern Chalukyas—which had a prosperous career down to 1070. He also crossed the Kaveri and invaded the country of the Cholas, the Pandyas and the Keralas who appear to have become his allies.

Foreign Relationship

Pulakesin's fame reached far and wide. The king of Persia, Khushru II, sent in 625 A.D. a special embassy to him. The whole scene is supposed by scholars to be depicted in a large frescoe-painting in one of the Ajanta caves.

Hiuen Tsang on Pulakesin II

It was also in the time of Pulakesin II. that the famous Chinese pilgrim, Hiuen Tsang, visited his empire. No part of this Chinese Pilgrim's diary is more interesting than that in which he has recorded his admiration of Pulakesin and his methods of administration.*

Sad End of Pulakesin

The last days of this san of glory were in strange contrast to his hitherto victorious career. The Pallavas whose territories he invaded, from whom he took Vengi, never forgave Pulakesin II. Under their ablest ruler Narasimhavarman, they suddenly invaded the Chalukya dominions, took Vatapi, the capital and also burnt it. In the course of the conflict, Pulakesin II was slain.

* Of the king himself Hiuen Tsang says:—"He is of the race of the Kshatriyas. His ideas are large and profound and he extends widely his sympathy and benefactions. His subjects serve him with perfect devotion." He has similarly nothing but praise for the country of Maharashtra. "The soil is rich and fertile and yields a great harvest of corn. * * The manners of the people are simple and honest. They are tall, proud and distant. Whoever does them a kindness can count on their gratitude. But he who does them an injury never escapes their vengeance. If any one insults them, they risk their life to wash out the affront * * * In battle they pursue the fugitives but never kill those who surrender * * * The men love study and practise at the same time heresy and truth * * * The heretics of the different sects are very numerous."—Translated by Kincaid from M. Julien's French translation of Hiuen Tsang's travels and quoted by him in his *A History of the Maratha people*, Vol. I, p.21.

Successors of Pulakesin II.

He was succeeded by his son Vikramaditya I (653 A.D.) who avenged his father's death by raiding the Pallava territory and capturing Kanchi. During his time another branch of the Chalukyan dynasty was established in Southern Gujarat. The conflict with the Pallavas was continued in the succeeding reigns of Vinayaditya I, Vinayaditya II and Vijayaditya. Vikramaditya II, who followed the last king, again took Kanchi. His son Kirtivarman (747—753 A.D.) carried on the traditional fight with the Pallavas but had to succumb to one of his own vassals, Dantidurga, a Rashtrakuta chief. The hegemony of the Deccan thus passed on again to the Rashtrakutas.

Religion under the Early Chalukyas

The Jain religion seems to have enjoyed considerable patronage at the hands of the Early Chalukyas. Thus Pulakesin II patronised a certain Jain poet Ravikirti. Vinayaditya, the eighth in succession from Jayasimha the founder, had for his spiritual adviser a famous Jain Pandit.* We also learn from an inscription that Vikramaditya II, after repairing a Jain temple, gave a grant in connection with it to the great Jain disputant Vijayapandita. But the Chalukyas were tolerant towards other religions as is evident from the large number of temples built during this period in honour of the Puranic Triad—Brahma, Vishnu and Maheswara † Buddhism during this period was distinctly on the decline. Cave architecture received a special impetus at the hands of the Early Chalukyas. Mangalisa, for example, built a cave-temple at Badami, dedicated to Vishnu.

* (*Bombay Gazetteer* Vol. I, Part II, p. 191).

† M. S. Ramaswami Aiyyangar : *Studies in South Indian Jainism*, p. 111.

SECTION II. THE RASHTRAKUTAS, THE LATER CHALUKYAS AND THE YADAVAS OF DEVAGIRI.

Early History of the Rashtrakutas

The Rashtrakutas who thus superseded the Chalukyas had been in the Deccan from very early times. Perhaps they were connected with the Rajput Rahtors. The territory occupied by them was originally known as Ratta-vadi; they had two capitals, one at Mayurakhandi (in the Nasik District) and the other, after the 9th century, at Manyakheta (Malkhed in the Nizam's Dominions) Their earliest recorded king was Indra, son of Krishna, and he was overcome by Jayasimha, the founder of the Early Chalukya line. The successors of Indra were all subservient to the Chalukyas. The next king Dantidurga raised the prestige of the Rashtrakuta family by defeating, as has been noticed, Kirtivarman II, the last Chalukya king. He was the founder of the new Rashtrakuta dynasty which for nearly two centuries and a half dominated the politics of the Deccan.

Dantidurga

Dantidurga, judging from the *birudas* that he assumed, must have been a powerful king.* By 754 A.D. he had taken possession of all the Chalukyan Dominions except the southern portion. By about the same time Dantidurga completed his conquests by forcing into submission the rulers of Kanchi, Kalinga and Srisaila (Karnul). Eventually this warrior and founder of the Malkhed dynasty of Rashtrakutas grew to be unpopular and was in consequence deposed in favour of his uncle Krishna I.†

* Among his titles were *Khadgavaloka* (he whose glances are as keen as the edge of the sword); '*Prithivivallabha*; *Maharajadhiraja*; *Paramesvara* and *Paramabhattaraka*.' One of his records contains the boast that his 'elephants rent asunder the banks of the rivers Mahi, Mahanadi and Reva (Narmada).'—(*Bombay Gazetteer*, Vol. I, Part II, p. 389).

† *Ibid.*

Krishna I

Dantidurga was succeeded therefore by Krishna I who assumed the titles of *Akalavarsha* (the untimely rainer) and *Subhatunga* (prominent in good fortune)—epithets entirely justified as his further consolidation and expansion of the Rashtrakuta empire indicate. A great achievement of Krishna was the construction of an elaborate temple of Siva—the Kailasa Temple at Ellora in the Nizam's Dominions—a rock-cut marvel representing Siva's Himalayan Paradise.*

Govinda II and Dhruva

Krishna reigned some time between 753 A D. and 775 A.D.† He was succeeded by his eldest son Govinda II, who was soon set aside by his brother who bore the name of Dhruva. The Pallava dominions which were extensive, were in a disorganised condition now; upon this fell Dhruva and forced the Pallava ruler to pay a yearly tribute of elephants. Dhruva next crossed the Vindhyas, invaded the country of the Vatsa Raja and humbled him.

Govinda III

Dhruva was succeeded by his son Govinda III, who "may justly claim to be the most remarkable prince of this vigorous dynasty."‡ At the time of his coronation, a confederacy of hostile kings attempted to prevent his accession, but Govinda shattered it He marched against the Gurjara king who fled before him. He received the submission of the Malavas. He marched his army to the Tungabhadra and forced the previously subjugated Pallavas to give him more tribute Now that the Rashtrakuta dominions had expanded in all directions, Govinda III transferred his capital from the distant Mayurakhandi (in

* See *Ancient and Medieval Architecture of India*, by E. B. Havell for details of this structure.

† Kincaid: *A History of the Maratha People*, Vol. I, p. 24.

‡ V. A. Smith: *Early History of India*, p. 887.

the Nasik District) to the more centrally situated Malkhed (in the Nizam's Dominions). The dominions of Govinda III extended "from the western coast far across towards the east and from the neighbourhood of the Vindhya mountains and Malwa in the north to at least the Tungabhadra in the south."* The country of the Latas (Southern Gujarat) also belonged to Govinda; for a record mentions that he appointed his brother Indra Raja as viceroy of the place.

Amoghavarsha

Govinda's son, Amoghavarsha I, came to the throne in 815 A.D. and had a long and prosperous reign. During his time the war between the Rashtrakutas and the Eastern Chalukyas went on with varying success. In all probability the fortification of Malkhed begun by his father, was completed by Amoghavarsha. This king was famous as a great patron of Jainism and in fact a Jain work *Ratnamalika* is attributed to him.

Krishna III

The successors of Amoghavarsha are mere names. Tenth in succession from Dhruva was Krishna III, famous for his onslaughts against the Cholas. About the middle of the 10th century A.D., the Chola Empire had extended itself considerably and its boundaries almost touched the Rashtrakuta territory. In 949 A.D. the Chola king Rajaditya invaded the lands of a tributary Chalukya prince Perumanadi. The latter's appeal to his overlord brought the forces of Krishna the Rashtrakuta to Takkolam where a battle was fought, and the Chola king killed. Taking advantage of his success, Krishna III marched with his full force on Kanchi, now a Chola town, and invested Tanjore. This adventure of Krishna did not, however, result in any annexation of Chola territory.

Battle of Takkolam

The last of the Rashtrakuta line was Karka, otherwise known as Kakkala. He incurred the enmity of the Paramara

* Dr. Fleet in his *Dynasties of the Kanarese Districts.*

kings of Malwa, who invaded Maharashtra. Malkhed, the Rashtrakuta capital, was at their mercy. In the midst of his struggles with the Paramaras, a brave but obscure Chalukyan hero, 'sprung from a branch of the main dynasty,' (Taila or Tailapa II) ousted the Rashtrakutas from power and established a new dynasty, known as the Later Chalukyas of Kalyani (973 A.D.)

End of the Dynasty

We shall now follow the political fortunes of the Western Chalukyas whose power was restored, thanks to the valour and enterprise of Taila, who acquired the whole of the Rashtrakuta kingdom with the exception of Gujarat. In this newly acquired dominion must be included the Kuntala-Desa comprising the whole of the Kanarese districts. Taila or Tailapa's next task was to secure his frontier against the Paramara aggression. Munja, the Paramara king, invaded the dominions of the Chalukyas at least sixteen times and defeated Taila. Finally however, Munja, in an attempt to cross the Godavari, was taken prisoner and executed. Taila reigned for twenty-four years and towards the end of A.D. 997 was succeeded by his son Satyasraya.

Revival of the Western Chalukyas—Taila

Satyasraya (997—1008) had great difficulty in maintaining his kingdom. During his time the Cholas whose power had increased after the fall of the Rashtrakutas, entertained schemes of vast conquest and attacked the Ganga kingdom. The Chalukyan monarch marched south to meet the Cholas but was defeated by the Chola king Raja Raja I who pillaged the country around.

Satyasraya

Satyasraya was succeeded first by Vikramaditya I, his nephew, and then by the latter's brother Jayasimha who carried on unsuccessful warfare against the Cholas. This rising Tamil power had already annexed Gangavadi and made the Tungabhadra and the Krishna its northern frontier.

Vikramaditya and Jayasimha

Chola Politics—Death of Somesvara

In 1040 Somesvara I succeeded Jayasimha. He assumed the title of Ahavamalla and continued with great spirit, though not with success, his war against the traditional enemy—the Cholas. In 1052 was fought the battle of Koppam, in which both sides claimed victory. The Chola King Rajadhiraja fell in this battle. But other circumstances prolonged the bloody struggle between the two powers. Ahavamalla took up, on appeal, the cause of Prince Kulottunga of the Eastern Chalukyas. This prince was sought to be ousted from his father's throne in favour of his uncle, who obtained the ear of the Chola Emperor Vira Rajendra.*

In the course of the war that ensued, Somesvara I was defeated first at Bezwada and then again at Kudal Sangam, the junction of the Krishna and the Tungabhadra. In 1069 Somesvara committed suicide by drowning himself in the Tungabhadra.

The period succeeding that of Ahavamalla was most disastrous to the Western Chalukyas, who were now torn by a civil war of succession.† For the many details of this

* The following genealogy will make this point clear :—

Raja Raja I
(985 -1013).

- Rajendra (1011 – 1042).
  - Rajadhiraja (1018—1052).
  - Rajendra (1050—1063).
  - Vira Rajendra (1062-1070).
  - Ammangadevi *m.*
- Kundavvaiyyar *m.* East Chalukya Vimaladitya (1011—1022).
  - (Ammangadevi *m.*) Raja Raja I
    - Kulottunga.
  - Vijayaditya

† Of the two rival brothers the elder was a cypher in politics while the younger Vikramaditya showed conspicuous ability and courage in handling state affairs. Yet their father died without nominating the really

period we are indebted to Bilhana, a Kashmirian poet who lived in the court of Vikramaditya II and wrote an account of his patron—*Vikramanka Deva Charita.*

Vikramaditya II

In 1076 Kulottunga led his forces against the Chalukyas. Somesvara II proving himself incompetent to meet the crisis, the army went over to Vikramaditya who had no difficulty in proclaiming himself as the sovereign The details of the struggle between the Western Chalukyas and Kulottunga are obscure. The war ended in peace (1080).

Kulottunga Chola

Vikramaditya continued to reign gloriously for nearly half a century. But the long and peaceful reign was marred by incidents which necessitated strong military action. Some time after the war with Kulottunga, Vikramaditya's brother Jayasimha, who was in charge of the province of Banavasi, rebelled and had to be put down. Next he marched his army to Kanchi and took the city. About A. D. 1117 the Hoysalas who had already won successes against the Cholas, tried to measure swords with the Western Chalukyas and successfully attacked the forces of Vikramaditya when in camp. These Hoysala raids were put an end to by a loyal Sinda chieftain Achugi II.

Victories of Vikramaditya

efficient son to the throne. Disappointed in his attempt to get the crown, Vikramaditya fled to the Chola camp at Kudal Sangam, and sought the aid of Vira Rajendra the Chola, who not only promised his help but gave his daughter also in marriage to the Chalukyan prince. This act, done in a fit of anger against his brother, did not materially advance the cause of Vikramaditya; for the Cholas continued to invade the territories of the Chalukyas without caring to help Vikramaditya. Furthermore dynastic quarrels and intrigues in the Chola country threatened to involve Vikramaditya in the struggle, from which he extricated himself with great skill. At last Prince Kulottunga of the Eastern Chalukyas, already mentioned, backed by a loyal force, obtained the Chola throne and claimed it as the grandson of Raja Raja the Great (see the table). He also ousted his uncle from the Eastern Chalukyan throne.

Court of Vikramaditya

Vikramaditya continued to rule till 1127. He was a great patron of letters and religion. His court was a brilliant one and it consisted of such great men of letters as Bilhana, the Kashmirian poet, and Vijnanesvara,* the author of the *Mitakshara*, the chief authority on Hindu Law in the country. In religion, Vikramaditya was perhaps a Vaishnava,† but, being extremely tolerant, he made grants to other gods, such as Lokesvara and Buddha.

Decadence of the Chalukyas

The Chalukya power began rapidly to decline after Vikramaditya. He was immediately succeeded by Soma, called also Bhulokamalla. The dominions were kept in tact during his time and the king himself was regarded as *Sarvajna* (all wise) by other chieftains A great patron of learning like his father he himself was a man of considerable literary tastes ‡ He died in 1138 A. D.

Successors of Vikramaditya

Jagadekamalla succeeded him and reigned for twelve years (1138-1150). Two of his exploits are known from the records, his conquest of the Pallava territories and his resistance of an invasion of the Hoysalas. Under his son Tailapa II, the empire rapidly sank. The example set by Vikramaditya II in setting up viceroys against his brother Somesvara II proved to be dangerous in the end. For the various chiefs under the empire gradually

* The glory of his capital and name is well-preserved in the following panegyric of Vijnanesvara : -

"There has not been, there is not and there will not be, on the surface of the earth, a city like Kalyana ; and never was a monarch like the prosperous Vikramanka seen or heard of."—Bhandarkar's *Early History of the Deccan*.

† Dr. S K. Aiyangar : *Ancient India*, p. 148.

‡ He appears to be the author of *Manasollasa*, a treatise in Sanskrit on the policy and recreation of kings.—(L. Rice : *Mysore*, Vol. I, p, 380).

began to break away from the central authority and whenever opportunities arose did not hesitate to flout the king and make themselves independent. One such chief in the time of Taila, followed his success against a frontier tribe and proclaimed his independence. He was Vijjala, the Viceroy of Banavasi, and of the Kalachurya race. In 1157, he imprisoned his master and became supreme.

Usurpation of Vijjala

Vijjala, the Kalachurya, who thus usurped the throne was a Jain and he had for his minister a Brahman, Basava, the founder of the Lingayat religion. There can be no love between those who follow rival faiths; and the master and the servant were soon embroiled in religious disputes and advantage was taken of the distracted condition of the state by Somesvara Chalukya, the son of Taila, who in 1182, managed to recover the southern part of his father's dominions. He retained possession of these till A.D. 1189 when a fresh political revolution hurled him from power. Out of the general confusion that ensued two powerful families appeared and shared the political power in the Deccan. These were the Yadavas of Devagiri and the Hoysalas of Dwarasamudra. Thus disappeared from history the great and powerful Chalukyas as a dominant power. Scions of the line, however, seem to have remained as petty chiefs in parts of the Konkan till the 13th century.

The Kalachuris

The Kalachuris who supplanted the Chalukyas in 1151 A.D. next demand our attention. Though their sway lasted only for a short time (1151—1182 A.D.) this period is important for the growth of a religious sect, the Lingayats, who number very largely in the Kannada-speaking regions That the Kalachuris were an ancient people is clear from their use of an era, the Chedi Era, corresponding to 249 A D. In their Mysore records they style themselves "Lord of the City of Kalanjara" (a famous fortress in Chedi or Bundelkhand). We are here mainly concerned with their enterprise in the Deccan.

As has been stated Vijjala or Bijjala who was viceroy under the Chalukyas put himself in power by treacherously imprisoning his master Taila (1156).

Vijjala (1156—67)

This usurper fell in love with a beautiful lady of Brahman birth, Padmavati, and gave himself up entirely to her. Padmavati's brother was Basava who naturally rose to the position of chief minister and commander. Now Vijjala was a Jain and the many officers of state followed the royal religion. This was not liked by Basava who dismissed the Jain officers and appointed his own men to responsible posts. This roused the anger of the king, more particularly as Basava promulgated a new creed, the Lingayat faith. This quarrel led to the assassination of Vijjala by Basava.*

The Successors of Vijjala

The Chalukya king in the meantime recovered a part of his former territory ; "but the territories of both towards the south were absorbed into the dominions of the Hoysalas, who had by this time risen to power in Mysore."

The Lingayats

Basava, the chief minister of Vijjala, was the founder of the new creed, Lingayatism. He was the son of a Brahman, a native of Belgaum. Legend has it that in his early days he protested against some of the Brahman practices, such as the wearing of the sacred thread, early marriage, and the enforced widowhood of Hindu girls. So when he rose to power under the Kalachuris, he transformed his religious and social views into the creed of a new faith. The followers of Basava, known

* The murderer did not live long to enjoy his power in the state, for Vijjala's son Rayamurari Sovi hunted down Basava from place to place till the latter committed suicide by throwing himself into a well. The Lingayats themselves say that hunted and pursued Basava disappeared into the Linga at Sangamesvara at the junction of the Malprabha and the Krishna—L. Rice : (*Mysore*, Vol. I, p. 332).

as Lingayats, reject the authority of the Vedas and the caste system. They have an intense regard for three things, the Guru, the Linga and the Jangam (fellow-religionist). Sometimes the Lingayats are known as *Vira Saivas.* Their principal sacred books are the *Basava Purana* and *Channa Basava Purana* written in Hala Kannada. These contain an account of the miraculous deeds of their saints and Gurus Evidence is lacking for us to definitely state whether this extreme form of Saivite worship was prevalent in ancient times ; but the anti-Brahmanical tendencies of the faith are remarkable. The Lingayat faith has spread, since its foundation, into Mysore and the Southern Maratha country. It was the faith of the rulers of Mysore from 1399 to 1610 and of the rulers of Bednore. There are many adherents of the sect to-day in Mysore and other places.

The Yadavas of Devagiri.

Among the powers that struggled for portions of the Chalukya dominion on its downfall were the Yadavas of Devagiri. They traced their descent from Krishna, the Divine Charioteer of Arjuna in the Bharata War. In the introduction to Hemadri's *Vratakhanda,* the name Subahu occurs; and he is to be considered as the semi-historical founder of the Yadava dynasty. One of his sons Dridhaprahara obtained the south, *i.e,* the Seuna country which extended from Nasik to Devagiri. Twenty-one kings ruled after him. But the one in whose time the Yadavas attained predominance was Bhillama (1187—1191) who had his capital at Devagiri. Bhillama had to struggle against the Hoysalas who carried their conquests beyond the Krishna. In the end the Hoysalas were forced to retire to the line south of the Tungabhadra. Bhillama was succeeded by Jaitugi or Jaitrapala (1191—1210); and he by Singhana (1210—1247) who was perhaps the most powerful of the line. " He invaded Gujarat and other countries and established a short-lived kingdom almost rivalling in extent the realms of the Chalukyas and the Rashtrakutas."*

* V. A Smith: *Early History of India,* p. 393. See also *The Bombay Gazetteer* Vol. I ; Early History of the Dekkan, Sec XV.

The next important ruler of the dynasty was Ramachandra, a grandson of Singhana (1271—1309). For reasons not known, he changed his capital to Betur in Mysore. It is probable that his general, Saluva Tikkanna, made a victorious expedition to the south. The Muhammadans were already knocking at the door of the Deccan ; and in the time of Ramachandra, Ala-ud-din Khilji conceived the idea of conquering the Deccan country (1294). The energetic Khilji soon appeared before Devagiri, invested the capital which was unprepared, defeated the Rajah who was foolish enough to offer resistance, and carried off large booty, besides forcing an annual tribute from Ramachandra. In 1306, Malik Kafur organized under the orders of Ala-ud-din Khilji another expedition to Devagiri. This time the Raja submitted and was allowed to rule over his territory for the rest of his life. His brother Sankara who succeeded him (1309-1312) rebelled against the Khiljis which cost him his life. Malik Kafur now took up his residence at Devagiri. In 1316 Harapala, a son-in-law of Ramachandra, made a vain attempt to restore the dynasty. In the meanwhile Ala-ud-din died and the throne was usurped by Malik Kafur ; the usurper eventually was driven out by Mubarak who was acknowledged as the true successor of Alauddin. In 1318 Mubarak led an expedition to the Deccan, captured the rebel Harapala and flayed him alive. Thus ended the dynasty of the Yadavas.

Ramachandra and the Muhammadan Invasion

CHAPTER XIV.

THE HISTORY OF SOUTH INDIA.

SECTION I. THE EARLY TAMIL KINGDOMS.

The term 'South India'

The term 'South India' is used in this chapter to indicate, in the main, that portion of Peninsular India lying to the south of the Krishna. This includes three well-marked divisions, the narrow coastal strip between the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea, the broader strip of plain between the Eastern Ghats and the Bay of Bengal and the elevated land between the two Ghats.

Early Settlers

This region was in very ancient times occupied by tribes known as the *Villavar* (Bowmen), the *Minavar* (fishermen) and the *Nagas* (serpent-worshippers). They were later on conquered and subdued by the more powerful and highly civilised Dravidian tribes who established several kingdoms and chiefships. No consistent account of the early history of South India can be written for want of sufficient materials.

Goography of Tamilakam

The land of this race was known as *Tamilakam*. According to the evidence gathered from early Tamil literature, it extended from the Tirupathi Hill, about 100 miles north-west of Madras, to Cape Comorin and from the Coromandel Coast to the Arabian Sea. It was divided into 13 *Nadus* or provinces. Some of these coalesced together to form big kingdoms. At the dawn of the Christian era, the country south of the Krishna was divided among 'the three crowned kings,'—the Chola, the Pandya and the Chera—and seyen smaller chieftains. The

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coastal regions and the more open country belonged to the kings while the hilly tracts in the interior belonged to the chieftains.

The east coast from Pulikat to Tondi (in the Ramnad District) belonged to the Chola. Within this area must be included little patches of land belonging to tribal chieftains more or less subject to Chola control. South of the Chola kingdom lay the territory of the Pandya, "embracing within its borders, the modern districts of Madura and Tinnevelly, and part of Travancore State." Under the Pandyan sphere of influence were the chieftains of Aay round the Podiyil Hill and Pehan round the Palnis. The land of the Cheras lay north-west of the Pandyan kingdom along the Western Ghats on the sea-side. It stretched right across the Palghat Gap taking in portions of Salem and Coimbatore. South Mysore was parcelled out among a number of chieftains, corresponding to the modern *Palayagars*. The frontiers of *Tamilakam* were held by Nannan of the Tulu country and the Konkan and Pulli of Vengadam (Tirupathi). Further north of this frontier line was the land of the Vadukars (northerners). Such was the distribution of political power at the beginning of the Christian era.

Frontier Chieftains

Anything like a chronological survey of South Indian History previous to the 8th century A.D., is impossible in the present state of our knowledge. Even in regard to its main currents we are left largely to infer from the fugitive poems composed in what is known as the Sangham Age. All that we can now safely assert is that the Chola, Pandya and Chera kingdoms were among the earliest in India to be organized on civilised lines. The frequent wars among 'the three crowned kings' of *Tamilakam* may also be interpreted as an attempt on the part of each of these powers to gain for itself a suzerain position. That

Scanty Sources

such a position was actually realised in the 1st century A. D. by the Chola king, Karikala, seems to admit of no doubt.

Early Chola Imperialism

Karikala (or the Black-Foot* as he was nicknamed), was the most famous of all the kings mentioned in early Tamil literature. His early days were full of of trouble. A very powerful king, he defeated the Cheras and the Pandyas in a decisive battle. He enlarged the Chola dominion, transferred the capital from Uraiyur in the interior (near Trichinopoly) to Kaverippattinam at the mouth of the river Kaveri and made the Chola name respected all over *Tamilakam* and even beyond. He is, however, best remembered for the building of flood-banks for the river Kaveri. The frequent inundations of the Kaveri wrought ruin to the agriculturists and to prevent this, Karikala raised the banks for 100 miles on both sides so that not only was the danger from floods averted, but by an ingenious system of canals, the entire volume of the Kaveri water was utilised to irrigate the land.

Karikala Chola

Early Tamil poets represent him as having invaded Ceylon and carried off thousands of prisoners to work on the embankments. Karikala was also a great patron of letters. " His reign was long, and taken along with those of his two predecessors and the next following him, constitutes the period of the first Chola ascendancy in the south." One main cause of the Chola supremacy in the 1st century A, D. was the great wealth obtained through the port Kaverippattinam, then a great emporium. But we are told that in the reign of his son it was destroyed by a huge tidal wave. From that time onwards

* A rival king, having taken possession of his father's throne, desired to put an end to the life of Karikala; and so he set fire one night to the house where the boy was sleeping. In trying to effect his escape he stumbled over the embers and had his feet badly burnt. With the help of an uncle, Karikala regained his throne. From that time he was known as Karikala or Black-Foot.

the Cholas sank in power and prestige and their place as an 'Imperial state' was taken by the Cheras.

The 'Red Chera'

Sometime after Karikala the Cheras under their redoubtable leader and warrior, Senguttuvan (the Red Chera (2nd century A. D.) established a hegemony which did not however survive him long. According to evidence furnished by the Sangham Literature, the son and successor of the 'Red Chera,' was defeated in battle and taken prisoner by the Pandyan king Nedunjeliyan. The result of this epoch-making struggle was that the Pandyas took the place of the Cheras and held the hegemony in their hands for several generations (second to the fourth century A. D.) By this time the Pallavas had dispossessed the Cholas of most of their northern viceroyalty and had established a dominion which was soon to overshadow the traditional Tamil powers. Such was the course of South Indian History during the first four centuries of the Christian era.

SECTION II. THE PALLAVAS AND THEIR AGE

The Pallava Problem

Writing many years ago the late Dr. V. A. Smith observed that "the Pallavas constitute one of the mysteries of Indian History." Since then many scholars, both Indian and European, have been making elaborate investigations in regard to the origins of the Pallavas.*

Origin of the Pallavas

Some scholars believe that the Pallavas were a foreign tribe of Parthian origin who migrated from the north-west right up to Conjeevaram. They think that the Pallavas of South India were the same as the Pallavas who figure largely in the list of frontier tribes mentioned in the epics and in inscriptions. These

* For a clear and concise account of the Pallavas, see the booklet on the subject by Prof C. S. Srinivasachariar M A. (1924), Wesleyan Mission Press, Mysore—See also J. Dubreuil—The Pallavas. Dr. S. K. Iyangar, V. Venkayya and R. Gopalan have published good papers on the subject.

references are held to justify the foreign theory of the origin of the Pallavas. As against this contention Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar argues that the Sangham Literature (of the 2nd and 3rd centuries A.D.) contains references to the Pallavas who were known as Tondaiyar, that they were closely related to the Naga chieftains who guarded the frontier of the Satavahana Empire and that therefore the Pallavas must be considered as natives of South India. In further support of his view, he quotes from a geographical work, named *Bhuvanakosa*, whose author Rajasekhara flourished at the commencement of the 10th century A. D. In that book a distinction is made between the regions of the northern Pahlavas and those of the Pallavas whose teritories lay in the south *

Pallavas and the Audhra Empire

Whatever might be the truth about the origin of the Pallavas, it cannot be denied that they had a spacious history. Their definite sway over large portions of South India commenced with the downfall of the Andhras. In fact " the Pallavas succeeded to the whole of the southern portions of the Andhra Empire." When the Andhra Empire broke up early in the 3rd century A. D, some of the feudatories of the Satavahana dynasty became independent. One such was Mahasenapathi Skanda Naga who became heir to, among other states, Tondamandalam as well. A daughter of this Naga chief was given in marriage to a Pallava prince, perhaps Vira-kurcha who " simultaneously with the hand of the daughter of the chief of serpents grasped the complete insignia of

* S. K. Aiyangar: Chaps. VII and VIII in ***Some Contributions of South India to Indian Culture.***

Pallavas Natives of South India

The late Mr. M. Srinivasa Aiyangar, author of ***Tamil Studies***, expressed the opinion that the Pallavas belonged to the ancient Naga people and that they were ethnically related to the ***Kallars*** or thieves of the Tamil country. This view has apparently beer supported by Dr. Smith who quotes Mr. Aiyangar with approval. (Smith ; ***Oxford History of India***, 2nd Ed, p. 205).

royalty and became famous."* Virakurcha thus appears to be the first most important king of the Pallavas.

Period of Pallava Rule

The history of Pallava rule at Kanchi falls into 4 divisions: (1) The period of Prakrit Charters, (2) The period of Sanskrit Charters, (3) The great Pallavas, and (4) that following the usurpation of Nandivarman. The exact relationship of the dynasties that ruled in these periods with one another has not been fully ascertained. Nor has it been easy to construct the genealogy of the Pallava kings who issued the Prakrit and Sanskrit charters The age covered by the latter may be regarded as the formative period of Pallava history. During this period the Pallava dominions comprised the territory from Kanchi to Vengi and the districts of Kurnool, Anantapur, Cuddapah and Bellary. Certain important details contained in these early inscriptions indicate "that the Pallava administration was northern in character, perhaps quite distinct from that of the Tamils further south."

The Line of Simhavishnu

The most glorious period of Pallava history commences with the third dynasty, the founder of which was Simhavishnu (*cir* 590 A D.) He and his successors are designated as the Great Pallavas. Simhavishnu claims to have conquered, besides the Chola and Pandya kings, Ceylon as well. His son and successor was Mahendravarman I (*cir.* 600-630 A. D.) It was during his time that Pulakesin II of the Western Chalukyas invaded the northern dominions of the Pallavas and took from them Vengi. Though defeated in war, Mahendra's glory remained unsullied He rendered his name famous by building many rock-cut temples at Trichinopoly, Pallavaram, Mamandur and other places. He was also a patron of letters. His achievements are thus described by Dubreuil : "He checked the Chalukya invasion at Pullalur; he gave a new

* J. Jouveau Dubreuil: *The Pallavas*, p. 23.

impulse to Saivism; he glorified poetry and music (it appears he was himself the composer of some *Svaras*); he transferred the taste for rock-cut temples from the banks of the Krishna to those of the Palar and the Kaveri; and for administrative purposes he built tanks at Mahendravadi, Mamandur and probably at Dalavanu."* In the history of religious movements in South India, Mahendravarman holds a honoured place. A Jain at first, he was converted by Saint Appar to Saivism He also took a leading part in driving the Jains from out of the Pallava country and stimulating the revival of Saivism under the Nayanmars.

Mahendravarman I

Mahendravarman was succeeded by his son Narasimhavarman, surnamed the Great (*cir.* 630–668 A D) He repeatedly defeated the Cholas, Keralas and Pandyas. Organizing a great force he entered the Chalukyan territory, took its capital Vatapi and also burnt it (642 A.D).† It was during this struggle that Pulakesin II, met with his death. There seems to be no doubt that Narasimhavarman undertook two expeditions to Ceylon. This shows that this Pallava ruler developed his navy which was stationed at Mamallapuram ‡ It was during the reign of this king that the Chinese pilgrim Hiuen Tsang visited Kanchi. He noted " that the soil was fertile and well cultivated and credits the inhabitants with the virtues of courage, trustworthiness, public spirit and love of learning."

Narasimhavarman, the Great.

* *The Pallavas*, 1917, (page 40).

† The date of the burning of Vatapi is important as it helps us to determine the date of Sambandar, a younger contemporary of Appar and a friend of another Saiva Saint Siruthondar, the general of the Pallava forces engaged in besieging Vatapi.

‡ In consequence of this ruler known as Mahamalla having magnified the naval station, the port came to be known as Mamallapuram (now corrupted to Mavalivaram).

Mahendravarman II

Narasimha was succeeded by his son Mahendravarman II whose reign was short and uneventful. He was followed by his son Paramesvaravarman I in whose time the struggle with the Chalukyas was resumed. The latter under Vikramaditya I had penetrated as far south as Uragapura (Uraiyur) and it required a combination of all the Tamil powers to drive him out.

Narasimhavarman II

The next reign that of Narasimhavarman II (690—715 A.D.) is important for the growth of the Saivite Revivalist movement and for the impetus given to the art of building stone-temples. The pious work of temple-building was carried on by his successor Paramesvaravarman II, the last of the Simhavishnu line.

Nandivarman and his Successors

The death of this king, who left no direct male heir, was followed by a war for the possession of throne, in which Nandivarman, a cousin of Paramesvara succeeded. He had a very long reign and was defeated by Vikramaditya II Chalukya (741 A. D.). He probably died in 771 and the throne was seized by Dantivarman, who, judged by his name, would appear to be a Rashtrakuta. Govinda III, the Rashtrakuta sovereign, defeated him and forced him to pay tribute. Indeed the Pallava kingdom was now being attacked on all sides. While the Rashtrakutas were gnawing at it from the north, the slow pressure of the Pandyas from the south was making it considerably weaker. About A.D. 825 the Pandyan king Varaguna overran half the Pallava empire. Nandi of Tellaru (830—854 A.D.), the next ruler, inflicted a defeat on the Pandyas on the banks of the Vaigai. The last of the Pallava rulers was Aparajita (close of the 9th century A.D.) who was decisively beaten in battle by Aditya Chola who took possession of both Tanjore and Trichinopoly. The Pallavas after Aparajita (cir. 900 A. D) disappeared as a ruling power, though petty Pallava chiefs continued to rule in various parts of the country under the Cholas.

Little was known hitherto about the culture of the Pallavas. But the recent discovery of valuable Sanskrit manuscripts and a scientific study of Hindu art and architecture enable us to realise what a rich and glorious heritage the Pallavas left to posterity. The Pallavas were great patrons of Sanskrit learning and did not appear to have encouraged Tamil poets till late in their history. Their capital Kanchi was a great centre of Sanskrit studies. Many eminent authors flourished in the courts of Pallava kings. Thus Bharavi, the author of *Kiratarjuniya*, is now known to be a contemporary of Simhavishnu, and Dandin, the author of *Kavyadarsa*, an authoritative work on poetics, perhaps lived in the time of Rajasimha, at the close of the seventh century A. D. Mahendravarman I himself was the author of a burlesque, *Mattavilasa Prahasana*, which was recently published in the Trivandrum Sanskrit Series. Surely the names of many more authors and their books must have been forgotten.

Pallava Culture

It is in the field of architecture that the Pallavas have left an imperishable record. Among the Pallava monuments, four distinct styles* can be noted.

Pallava Architecture

* The first is what is known as the Mahendra style. It is easily distinguished by the simplicity of its cave-temples having one external facade and a rectangular pillared hall. Such are the caves of Pallavaram, Trichinopoly, Mamandur and other places. The next or Mamalla style exhibits three kinds: cave-temples, monolithic free-standing temples (*rathas*) and rock-sculptures as seen in Mamallapuram. "The cave-temples become more ornamental and the panels more sculptured; and the rock sculptures are large bas-relief sculptural scenes on the face of a cliff...." In the next stage, *i.e.*, the Rajasimha style (A.D. 674—800) rock-cut architecture ends and structural buildings alone are met with—built of stone, sometimes with a brick superstructure and with a lofty tower rising in tiers over the shrine (*e.g.*, Kailasanathaswami Temple). In the last stage, *i.e.*, the Aparajita style (A. D. 800—900) there is a development of the apsidal-ended temple of the Mamalla period. This is the intermediate style between the Rajasimha and the Early Chola styles leading on to the great temple of Raja Raja at Tanjore. (Vide *Pallava Architecture*, by A. Longhurst; and Rea's *Pallava Architecture*.)

The Polity of the Pallavas

The Pallavas were great administrators. Fragmentary as is the information that can be gathered from inscriptions about their administrative system, we can yet discern its main outlines. The whole land was divided into *Mandalas*, *Valanadus* and *Nadus*. The village was the unit of administration and the village assembly, as in the days of the later Cholas, was invested with large powers. Tôwns had their own assemblies known as *Nagarattar*, Many kinds of taxes were levied. The king exacted many services from the people, but these were for the benefit of the community. The Pallavas, like the Cholas, bestowed special care on irrigation. Many irrigation works on a large scale were planned and executed in their time.

Religion in the time of Pallavas

In regard to the state of religion in the Pallava age, it must be noted that some of the early kings were Buddhists. The later Pallavas were most of them ardent Hindus devoted to Vishnu and Siva. That the Jains were numerous in the land, especially the Digambaras, is clear from the testimony of Hiuen Tsang. We have seen that Mahendravarman himself was a Jain, converted later on to Saivism by Saint Appar. In fact the Pallava period was a period of religious upheaval; the Saivite Nayanmars such as Appar and Sambandar on the one hand and the Vaishnavite Alwars on the other hand were particularly active, rooting out the rival faiths. Under the circumstances, there was little scope for Jainism or Buddhism to flourish in the country. To this period also must be attributed the beginning of temple-building on a large scale.

SECTION III. THE CHOLAS AND THEIR ADMINISTRATION.

We have already seen that in the 1st century A. D. the Cholas aimed at imperial dominion under Karikala.

Successors of Karikala

Their dominion declined under his successors. Nothing definite can be ascertained regarding these early Cholas. The names of a few of Karikala's successors are however known.*

By the 3rd century A.D., the Pallavas had taken possession of the northern portion of the Chola kingdom and were rapidly expanding in all directions.

Growing Weakness of the Cholas

The Cholas during this period did not pass out of existence; but they maintained a precarious independence, hemmed in by the Pallavas on the one side and the Pandyas on the other.† In the 7th century A.D., a branch of the Cholas was ruling in the Ceded Districts. Throughout the period of Pallava ascendancy, the Cholas continued to occupy an inferior position. In the 8th century, the Rashtrakutas had re-established their power on the ruins of the Early Chalukyas and frequently attacked the declining Pallava power. The Pandyas who remained comparatively unmolested, thanks to their remoteness from the Pallava centre, now took advantage of the growing weakness of the Pallavas and tried to assert their superiority. But their king Varaguna was defeated at the fateful field of Sripurambiyam by the combined forces of the Pallavas and the Gangas of Mysore (*cir.* 880 A.D.)

* They are mentioned in the Leyden Grant and the Tiruvalangadu Plates, such as Ko-Chenganan, a Saiva devotee, and Perunar-Killi. Tamil classics like the *Silappadhikaram* and the *Ahananuru* afford internal evidence which goes to show that the Chola kingdom about the end of the 2nd century A.D. was torn asunder by internal strife and unsuccessful war against the Pandyas.

† S. K. Aiyangar: *Ancient India* p. 97.

The Cholas were shrewd enough to recognise in this defeat of Varaguna their great opportunity. Under their chief Vijayalaya, they wrested Tanjore, really their own patrimony, from the Pallavas. The Pallava snake, already scotched by the Rashtrakutas, was finally killed by Aditya Chola, son of Vijayalaya. The historian stands on firm ground when he reaches the epoch of Vijayalaya. "The Cholas beginning with Vijayala up to Raja Raja the great, can therefore be called the makers of the Chola empire."

Revival of Chola Power

Vijayalaya, then, was the reviver of the Chola line. We do not know how he was exactly related to the earlier Cholas, the descendants of Karikala. It was his son Aditya that defeated Aparajita, the last of the Pallavas, and thus laid the foundation of the mighty Chola empire. He ruled the country wisely and very prudently confirmed the various grants made previously by the Pallava kings. If the *Kongudesarajakkal* can be believed, he also effected the conquest of the Kongu country. He was succeeded by his son Parantaka who also bore the title of *Parakesarivarman* (A.D. 906-7 to 952-53). He was friendly to the Cheras and subdued the Banas and Vaidumbas. He led three expeditions against the Pandyas and even invaded Ceylon. A pious devotee of Siva, he renewed the gold-plating of the great hall at Chidambaram, the *Dabhra Sabha.* Parantaka left many sons, of whom three would appear to have ruled in succession. Mention has already been made* that his eldest son Rajaditya met with his death on the battlefield of Takkolam fighting Krishna III, the Rashtrakuta king, thus continuing the Pallava tradition of unceasing war with the Deccan power. Five obscure kings followod him. Their reigns were short and full of troubles.

The Great Cholas : Vijayalaya and his Successors

* See the chapter on the *Rashtrakutas*.

In 985, the great Raja Raja ascended the throne. Putting an end to all palace intrigues, Raja Raja prepared himself for a grand career of conquest. He possessed all the qualities required for a warrior-statesman. At the end of his victorious career, he became the Lord Paramount of the whole of the present Madras Presidency and also of large portions of Mysore and Ceylon. His first campaign was directed against the Cheras whose fleet he destroyed at Kandalur. He not only subdued the Pandyas but took their king prisoner. Before A.D. 998-99, he had conquered Vengi, then ruled by the dynasty of the Eastern Chalukyas, as well as the bulk of the Mysore country. About the same time, he added to his conquests Kollam (in Travancore) and Kalingam (Orissa). About A. D. 1014, Raja Raja married his daughter Kundavvai to the Eastern Chalukya Vimaladitya, who remained loyal to the Chola king and thus helped the latter in his struggle with the northern power, the later Chalukyas of Kalyani who succeeded to the Rashtrakuta dominion in 973 A.D. The Chalukya king Satyasraya was definitely defeated by the Chola who also acquired, in his 29th year, "the twelve thousand ancient islands of the sea"—perhaps the Laccadives and Maldives.

Raja Raja the Great

Raja Raja was a great builder. The magnificent temple of Raja Rajesvara at Tanjore was built by him; but we are more indebted to him for recording his triumphs on the stone-walls of the temple. Although a Saiva himself, he pursued a tolerant policy towards other sects. There was no persecution of the Buddhists or the Jains who enjoyed equal privileges with the Hindus. All things considered, Raja Raja must be considered the greatest of all the Chola kings.

Rajendra, the worthy son of a truly great father, succeeded him. He faithfully carried on and completed the work of his father. Before his sixth regnal year he had conquered the Raichur Doab, Banavasi, and other regions. Ceylon and Kerala trembled before him. He also defeated the Western Chalukya ruler. In his 12th year he sent his general to the banks of the Ganges and defeated Mahipala of Bengal. On his way back the same general must have conquered Bihar also. The real object of these North Indian expeditions would seem to be the thorough conquest of Kalingam which was essential for the success of his overseas schemes of conquest. All these victories justified the assumption of the title *Gangaikonda* by Rajendra who also built a new capital which he named *Gangaikonda-cholapuram.*

Rajendra

While Rajendra's army was busy in the north, his fleet was none the less active. His expedition to Kadaram "is successfully identified with an invasion of the kingdom of Sri Vijaya (in Sumatra) which was then very powerful.*

Naval Enterprise

Next came Rajadhiraja, otherwise known as Jayangonda Chola, chiefly known for his struggle against the Chalukyas. He lost his life in the battle of Koppam (1053-1054). He was succeeded by Rajendra Deva, his brother (*d.* 1062). The next ruler was Rajamahendra whose reign was short. The crown passed on to Virarajendra whose greatest achievement was his successful struggle against the Chalukyas along the Tungabhadra line. As stated previously, the Chalukyan king Somesvara Ahavamalla was defeated at Kudal Sangam, a reverse which broke his heart. The Vijayalaya line now became extinct and

Rajadhiraja and Continued Struggles with the Chalukyas

* Dr S.K. Aiyangar—Rajendra the Gangaikonda – in *The Journal of Indian History*, Vol II, pp. 320, *et seq*.

Kulottunga, the Eastern Chalukya prince, who was the son of a daughter of Rajendra, ascended the throne.

The Reign of Kulottunga 1070—1118

Kulottunga was a great sovereign His first task was to restore order in the various parts of the empire. He next undertook an elaborate resurvey of the land. He wanted to thoroughly conquer Kalinga and with that end in view undertook two expeditions to that country. The object of his first invasion (1095-96 was to drive out Vikramaditya, the Chalukyan king who had invaded the country as far as Vengi. The second invasion of Kalinga was undertaken by the king's general, Karunakara Tondaiman (1112). The whole event is graphically described in a Tamil classic, *Kalingattupparani* composed by the court poet, Jayangondan who was perhaps a Jain. Kulottunga however seems to have lost the oversea possessions of the Cholas The Hoysalas of Mysore under Vishnuvardhana were also growing more and more powerful; so bold did they become that they invaded Gangappadi and occupied Talakad. Kulottunga died in A D. 1118.

Literary Activity

The age of Kulottunga was one of great literary and religious activity. In his time flourished the famous Vaishnava reformer, Ramanuja, who however had to take shelter under the Hoysalas to avoid the persecution of Kulottunga.* Mention has already been made of Jayangondan, the renowned author of *Kalingattupparani*. In all probability the erudite commentator of the *Silappadhikaram*, Adiyarkunallar, lived at this time. Sekkilar, the author of *Periyapuranam* (or Life of Saiva Saints), adorned the age.

* Dr. S K Aiyangar: *Ancient India*, p. 150.

Beginning of the Decline of the Cholas

With the death of Kulottunga, the Cholas began to decline. His successors could not check the growing tendencies of disintegeration within the empire, while formidable rivals began to establish themselves all along the frontier. The last great ruler to possess some semblance of authority was Rajaraja III (*cir.* 1216-1248). In his time the Pandya ruler Maravarman Sundara Pandya I. marched to Uraiyur and Tanjore and burnt them. Nor were the Cholas more successful against the Telugus who advanced as far as Kanchi. If the Chola empire did not at once collapse, it was due to the timely help rendered from time to time by the Hoysalas. To crown all these misfortunes, a civil war arose between Rajaraja III and his successor Rajendra III. By the close of the 13th century the Chola power ceased to exist as a political force. About 1200 A.D. the Chalukyas also disappeared from the Deccan.

Pandya Ascendancy

Their place was now occupied by the Pandyas who had extended their dominions up to the North Pennar, the Hoysalas, the Kakatiyas and the Yadhavas. "The empire that the great Cholas built," truly observes Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, "at so great an expense of labour and skill thus passed ingloriously out of existence through the ineptitude of a ruler or perhaps two, who while occupying the position, could not command the resources, either of ability in themselves or the sagacity to find and use it in others. * * *; but this must be said to the credit of its founders and maintainers that they did their work well and wisely so far as they could—nay, so far as man could."

Chola Administration

If the political details pertaining to the last days of the Cholas are dull, a knowledge of their system of administration ought to excite the utmost interest among students of Indian History. The vast empire of the Cholas was divided into six provinces or *Mandalams*. Each *Mandalam* was sub-divided into a number of *Kottams* or *Valanadus*. A *Valanadu* implies a group of districts. Each district or *Nadu* in its turn was sub-divided into *Kurrams* or villages or groups of villages. The village was the unit of administration. Each village had an assembly, the *Mahasabha*, which "though subject to supervision by royal officers or intendants (*Adhikarins*), exercised almost sovereign authority in all the departments of rural administration."

The Village Assembly

The assembly assessed and collected taxes and also determined in what manner the amount should be spent. It evicted cultivators for non-payment of taxes and had even the right of transferring jurisdiction over villages to other bodies. The accounts of the village assembly were periodically checked by royal officers who did not otherwise interfere in the affairs of the village. The practical work of rural administration was carried on by the various committees elected by the assembly. Thus there were a committee to look after the general affairs, a committee for tank supervision, a committee for gardens and another to look after the temple charities. The assembly would appear to have been invested with judicial powers also. The criminal law of the land was not severe. The jury system was in full use.

We do not know precisely what the composition of the assembly must have been. It varied according to the size and importance of the village. Elaborate rules and regulations existed for the election of members to the various committees.*

Election Rules

The central government was carried on by the king in person with the help of a large hierarchy of officials. First in importance was the *Olai Nayagan* or private secretary, in constant attendance on the king, who took down the oral orders of the king. This order must be signed, before despatch to royal officers called the *Adhikarins*, by five men who heard the king's order and two other officials. In the days of Raja Raja and his son all royal orders required the approval of the chief secretary and another high dignitary. Indeed the hundreds of Chola inscriptions that are daily being brought to light by the Epigraphical Department reveal the names of many officers whose functions are now difficult to interpret and shew to us what a highly organised administration the Cholas built up in days gone by.

The Central Government

* The village or union was divided into a number of wards and each ward sent a number of tickets containing the names of those eligible for offices and stating also the number recommended. These were subsequently thrown into a pot and the number required chosen by lot. Those eligible for membership of the various committees must, in general, possess a high capacity for business, besides being conversant with the sacred rules. Men who acquired wealth by questionable methods were ignored for any kind of work. The franchise itself was conferred upon those who had at least ¼ veli (or 6⅔ acres) of tax-paying land or who were between the ages of 35 and 70 or who possessed a house of their own or who had learnt and could explain one Veda and one of the Bashyas. The following persons were disqualified; (1) those who, while serving on the committees, had not submitted a proper account, (2) Sinners '*Panchamahapathakas*' and their relations, (3) fool-hardy people, (4) and those who had misappropriated other people's property. The actual process of selection of candidates from the pot was hedged round by such strict rules that corruption or malpractice at the time of the elections was impossible.—vide *South Indian Epigraphist's Report for 1898—99*, pp. 19 *et seq.*

Such an imperial race as the Cholas must have bestowed special attention on the army. It was divided into many sections; 'there were the chosen body of archers'; the body-guard; the chosen horsemen; the infantry of the right hand (வலங்கை); the elephant corps etc. Nor was the fleet neglected. It was the splendidly organised fleet of the Cholas that brought them considerable oversea dominions under Rajendra I.

Military Organisation

The Chola kings derived their main source of income from land; they took 1/6 of the gross produce which they received either in gold or in kind. Remissions of taxes in times of adversity were quite common. Many other taxes were also levied as occasion demanded, such as the octroi duty, the irrigation tax, taxes on trade, oil-mills and goldsmiths. The money thus raised was used to meet the cost of the civil and military administration, to construct waterways, to build grand trunk-roads and to beautify and maintain temples.

Sources of Revenue

The age of the Cholas was also an age of Tamil literary revival. This awakening was partly due to Sanskrit influence. "The sculptures of the the temples, the recitations of the Puranas and the Ithihasas familiarised the people with the legends and epics of the north. Bards and poets, some of them very great like Kambar, flourished; and the atmosphere was surcharged with religious enthusiasm. Saiva saints and Vaishnava Alwars came to be regularly worshipped and the *Mutts,* which rose into prominence and were patronised by the kings and nobles, sent out their monks as itinerant teachers and preachers." The influence of these Mutts and temples which also served as centres of charitable and educational activity, cannot be easily estimated.

Tendencies of the Chola Age

SECTION IV. THE CHERAS AND THE PANDYAS.

The Cheras

The land of the ancient Cheras comprised the modern district of Malabar and the two Native States of Cochin and Travancore. It was otherwise known as Kerala. Originally the Cheras were speaking Tamil but later on they evolved a new language called Malayalam. The capital of the kingdom was Vanchi or Karur Muchiri (Muziris) at the mouth of the Periyar river was a flourishing sea-port, carrying on extensive trade with the Yavanas (Greeks and Romans). The early history of the Cheras has not yet become fully available. The earliest king of whom anything is known was Athan I, a contemporary of Karikala Chola (1st cent. A.D.) He was defeated by the Cholas. His son Athan II. married the daughter of Karikala. His was a prosperous reign. He was a great patron of poets and the Brahman poet Kapilar, a member of the Tamil Sangham, lived in his court. Athan II was succeeded by his elder son, the famous Senguttuvan. In his time the Cheras rose to an imperial position.

Chera Hegemony

The achievements of Senguttuvan are clearly indicated in the Tamil epic, *Silappadhikaram*, composed by the king's own brother, Ilangovadigal, who became a monk and entered a Jain monastery Senguttuvan firmly planted on the throne of the Cholas his cousin, Killivalavan, a mere boy and the grandson of Karikala He won a great naval victory against the 'Kadamba,'—perhaps pirates having strongholds on the west coast He is said to have conducted his victorious army twice to the north of India and even to the Himalayas where he cut his bow-emblem on the rock there and also brought stone hewn from it, out of which he made an image of Kannaki * There is no doubt that in

* Kannaki is the wife of Kovilan whose history is narrated in the epic *Silappadhikaram*.

the 2nd cent. A D. the Cheras enjoyed a hegemony in *Tamilakam* But this leadership was lost in the time of his son and successor. The rest of the Chera history is a blank. The Kerala kingdom was soon incorporated into the Chola empire and in the days of Pandya revival, it was subject to the kings of Madura.

Obscure History of the Cheras

The Cheras (Keralas) later rose to importance after the first Muhammadan invasion of Madura (*cir* 1310) Taking advantage of the Pandyan troubles, a Kerala ruler, Ravivarman Kulasekhara with the title of Dakshina Bhoja Raja, overran the whole territory up to Kanchi. His victorious career was however meteor-like and vanished into air.

Ravivarman Kulasekhara

Excepting for the Brahmi inscriptions discovered in the Madura, Ramnad and Tinnevelly districts recently which appear to belong to the Asokan period, there are no other lithic records found in the Pandya country for nearly eight centuries after the Christian era.*

The Pandyas

The Pandyan kingdom was one of the most ancient states formed in the extreme south of India and mentioned in the epics. Megasthenes (4th century B C.) had certainly heard of it. The *Mahavamsa* says that King Vijaya of Ceylon (*cir.* 487 B C.) married a Pandyan princess. Katyayana (4th century B.C.) in his commentaries and Asoka in his inscriptions have made references to the Pandyan kingdom. Western writers like

Early References to the Pandyas

* We are forced to depend therefore upon the literature of the Sangham and post-Sangham periods for a knowledge of the early Pandyas. Such side-lights as are thrown by the Pallava and Later Chola inscriptions about the Pandyas are too vague and meagre to construct a consistent account about them The student will do well to bear this in mind when he reads the following sketch of the Pandya history.

Pliny and Ptolemy have mentioned about Madura and its trade. It is also an accepted fact that the Roman Emperor Augustus (*d.* 14 A. D.) received an ambassador from the Pandyan king. These references undoubtedly establish the antiquity of the Pandyas.

Their Ancient Capital

According to Tamil literature, the ancient capital of the Pandyas was at Korkai, at the mouth of the river Tamraparni, in the Tinnevelly district. This was a great emporium and carried on considerable trade, especially in pearl-fishery. The wealth of the Pandyas was mainly derived from its pearl trade. Besides pearl, other articles like pepper and cotton fabrics known as *Kalingam*, were exported to Greece and Rome which sent quantities of gold coins in return, hoards of which are discovered from time to time in the Madura country. After a time, Korkai ceased to be a great port owing to the receding of the sea.

Pandyan Kings of the Sangham Age

Most of the Pandya genealogies given in later records begin with a king, Palyagasalai, the ancestor perhaps of the Sangham kings* who form a group and who flourished in the first two centuries of the Christian era.

The Kalabhras

Their victory at Talaiyalanganam (end of the 2nd century A.D.) enabled the Pandyas to wrest the leadership in *Tamilakam.* During the period of the Pallava ascendancy, the Pandyas were eclipsed; but they, unlike the Cholas, enjoyed considerable independence in their own country. In the 6th century A.D. the Kalabhras,† invaded

* The important ones among them were Nedunjeliyan I, mentioned in the Tamil epic, *Silappadikaram*, who died of remorse for having executed Kovalan on a false charge; Nedunjeliyan II the victor of Talaiyalanganam who defeated a combination of other Tamil powers; and another, in whose court flourished Tiruvalluvar, the author of the immortal *Kural.*

† Described in the *Periapuranam* as a Vadugu Karnata people.

Madura and held the country for a time. This period is known as the 'Kalabhra Interregnum' which however did not last long. A new dynasty began with Kadungon. In the line of this king was Nedumaran, one of the sixty-three Saiva Nayanmars.*

After his son who seems to have been a brave warrior, came Nedunjadaiyan Parantaka, who issued the Velvikkudi grant, so important for the reconstruction of Pandyan history. He is said to have defeated the Pallavas at Pennagadam on the southern bank of the Kaveri. He had for his minister the famous Vaishnava saint Madhurakavi.† The period of Nedunjadaivan (last quarter of the 8th century A.D.) synchronises with the period of Pallava decline. The time was therefore most opportune for the Pandyas to wrest the hegemony of South India from the Pallavas; but civil discord in the Pandya country and the jealousy of petty chieftains prevented this consummation. The next great king was Srimara (830-862 A.D.) He was a very powerful ruler; and the evidence of epigraphy points to his having defeated at Kumbakonam a combined force of the Gangas, the Pallavas and the Kalingas. He also invaded Ceylon. His successor, Varaguna Varman, fought an unsuccessful battle against the Pallavas and the Western Gangas as told in a previous page. By this time the Pallava power had completely decayed and the Pandyas, as the second largest Tamil power, expected to step into the position of hegemony.

Mediæval Pandyas

* An interesting fact connected with him may be mentioned. Nedumaran otherwise known as *Kun Pandyan*, was a Jain at first. He was subsequently converted to Saivism by the famous Saiva Brahman, Saint Tirugnanasambandhar. Since regal religions alone generally prosper, this conversion of the king led to the downfall of Jainism in the Pandya country. The period of this Pandyan ruler falls between A.D. 650-680, *vide* K. V. S. Iyer: *Historical Sketches of Ancient Dekhan*, p. 137.

Kun Pandya

† This assumption is questioned by some scholars.

But the Cholas under Vijayalaya and Aditya, showed great vigour and enterprise and established a dynasty which enveloped not only the Pallava territory but the Pandya kingdom as well. About 995 A.D. Rajaraja completed the Chola conquest of the Pandyan country.

Chola Conquest of the Pandyas

From 995 to 1216 A. D. the Pandya kingdom formed but an appendage of the Chola empire. But when the latter began to show signs of decay, the Pandyas raised their heads again and under their kings, Maravarman Sundara Pandya I (1216-1239 A.D.), his son Sundara Pandya II (1238-55 A. D.) and Jatavarman Sundara Pandya (*cir.* 1251-75), reduced the bulk of the Chola territory into subjection. But the canker of internal disunion was eating into the vitals of the Pandyas as well. A disputed succession at Madura in 1310-11 A.D. was taken advantage of by Malik Kafur, the famous general of Ala-ud-din, who, entering the country on behalf of one of the claimants, left a military garrison there.

Later Pandya Revival

From this time a Mussalman ruler continued at Madura, though with interruptions caused by the frequent rising of the indigenous powers. He became independent of the Sultan of Delhi about 1335 A.D. Thus was established the short-lived Madura Sultanate. Nor was this left to enjoy peace undisturbed. Its short history (1335-1378 A.D.) was one of unceasing struggle with the Hoysalas, a neighbouring power, along the Kaveri-Coleroon frontier. About 1378 A.D., the Madura Sultanate was overthrown and absorbed, much to the relief of the Hindu population, by the rising power of Vijayanagar. Madura continued under the rule of Vijiayanagar and its Naik governors for a long time.

The Madura Sultanate

SECTION V. THE HOYSALAS AND THE KAKATIYAS.

The Hoysalas

Tucked away in the fastnesses of the Western Ghats there is a little village Angadi, identified by Lewis Rice with Sasakapura, which has the honour of being the birth-place of the Hoysalas, an essentially Mysorean dynasty. The founder was one Sala and the story given below* is told to explain how he came to found a dynasty.

Sala and Vinayaditya

Little else is known of Sala (*cir.* 1007 A.D.) His successor, Vinayaditya (1047-1100 A.D), conquered the Malapas or hill chiefs and ruled over South Canara and Mysore. He was a great builder of cities and towns. The period was the period of the death-struggle between the Cholas and the later Chalukyas; and the Hoysalas by helping the Chalukyas, their liege-lords, rose to considerable predominance.

Origin of the Name

* "Going one day to worship Vasantika, his family goddess, whose temple was in the forest near Sasakapura, his devotions were interrupted by a tiger, which bounded out of the jungle glaring with rage. The Yati or priest of the temple, snatching up a *Salaki* (a slender iron-rod) gave it to the chief saying in the Karnataka language, *Hoy Sala*, (Strike, Sala) on which the latter discharged the weapon with such force at the tiger as to kill him on the spot. From this circumstance he adopted the name Hoysala." According to a narrative in the Mackenzie MSS, the people of the locality were so glad of this exploit of Sala that at the instance of the Yati, an annual subscription of one *pana* (4 as. 8 ps.) per head of the population was raised and presented to Sala. When after five years the amount reached a respectable figure, Sala organised a small force and rebuilt the ruined fort of Dvarasamudra in the Belur Taluk, which later on became the chief city of the Hoysalas. It may be that there is a kernel of the fight that the Hoysalas had to wage with the Cholas whose crest was a tiger, in the story. *Vide* Rice: *Mysore and Coorg* (1909), p. 95; and *Mysore* (*A Gazetteer*, Revised edition) Vol. I, p. 335.

Bittideva (Vishnuvardhana) was the most famous among the Hoysalas. This doughty warrior of the line soon set out on a career of extensive conquests. Aided by his general Ganga Raja, he expelled the Cholas from the Ganga kingdom. He next marched south, and took possession of all territories now represented by the Salem, Coimbatore and Nilgiri districts. Westwards he conquered Malabar and South Canara. Roughly his kingdom included the whole of Mysore with most of Salem, Coimbatore, Bellary and Dharwar districts.

Bittideva Vishnuvardhana (1104-1141)

Bittideva holds an honoured name in the history of Vaishnavism in South India. Like Kun Pandya of Madura, this Hoysala monarch was a Jain by faith and was converted to Vaishnavism by the great Vaishnava apostle Ramanujacharya. After his conversion Bittideva assumed the name of Vishnuvardhana, This was a great blow to the cause of Jainism in Mysore. Vishnuvardhana died in 1141 A.D. Though practically independent, he and his successors owed a nominal allegiance to the Later Chalukyas.

His Conversion to Vaishnavism

After Vishnuvardhana ruled his son Narasimha I (1136-1171 A.D.) and grandson Vira Bellala II (1172-1219 A.D.) The latter extended the Hoysala dominions beyond the river Krishna. He defeated the Yadavas and also reduced the hill-fortresses along the Tungabhadra. From this time the Hoysalas became an imperial power, recognising no suzerain.

The Hoysalas become an Imperial Power

Vira Ballala's son Narasimha II (1220-1235 A.D) claims to have defeated the Pandyas and the Pallavas and to have restored to his throne the Chola 'who had been covered up under the dust raised by his enemies.' In the

Narasimha II

Somesvara

time of his successor, Somesvara (1233-1254 A. D.), the Hoysalas penetrated still further south. The king took up his residence at Kannanur near Srirangam (in the Trichinopoly District) and the kingdom was divided into two portions.

Narasimha III and his Successors

Narasimha III (1254-1291 A.D.) and Vira Ballala III (1291-1342 A.D.) were the last Hoysala kings to retain the integrity of the kingdom. In 1310 A.D., the Muhammadans under Malik Kafur came, pillaged and destroyed the capital, Dvarasamudra, and took the king a prisoner. Scarcely was the capital rebuilt by Narasimha when a fresh Muhammadan invasion ordered by Muhammad bin Tughlaq completely destroyed it. Vira Ballala wandered from place to place striving hard to regain power for the Hindu cause. He re-organised his resources quietly and unobserved and even laid the foundations of Hosapattana near the Tungabhadra which was intended to secure his northern frontier against the Mussalmans and which ultimately became the nucleus of the Kingdom of Vijayanagar. He had also to fight frequently against the Mussalmans settled in Madura, along the Kaveri-Coleroon frontier and died in one of such battles. After him, his successor Ballala IV. continued the struggle for the next few years down to 1346 A D. when he disappeared, probably fighting against the Muhammadans. It was soon after his death that the five brothers, Harihara, Bukka, etc., who were stemming the Muhammadan tide along the northern frontier and to whom the inscriptions of the time assign the foundation of Vijayanagar, rose into independence.*

* Dr. S. K. Iyengar : *South India and her Muhammadan Invaders* (1921). pp. 174 *et seq.*

THE KAKATIYAS OF WARANGAL.

The Kakatiyas—Their Origin

These were a feudatory family that rose out of the ruins of the Chola and the Later Chalukya empires. The details, however, of their rise and early growth are very meagre. The Kakatiya dynasty was reigning in Telingana, *i.e.*, the land of the Telugus, for 700 years before the capture of the city by Muhammad bin Tughlaq (1321).* The name Kakatiya is derived from Kakati, the goddess whom they worshipped. There are various legends which explain the origin of this dynasty.

Early Kakatiya Chiefs

The first important ruler was Tribhuvanamalla Betmaraja who was the reigning king at Hanumakonda about 1100 A D. He was succeeded by his grandson Prolaraja (or Prodaraja) about 1130 A. D. He was a very powerful king. He it was that built the city of Warangal, in the south-eastern portion of the Nizam's Dominions. His exploits were very many; but the names of the chiefs he defeated and the places he conquered cannot be identified.

Prataparudradeva I

After Prolaraja came his son, the famous Prataparudradeva I (*cir.* 1162 A.D.) He built a hall of thousand pillars at Hanumakonda.† Within this temple was discovered a long Sanskrit inscription in the old Kanarese characters from which our knowledge of the Kakatiyas is mainly derived. In regard to the other achievements of Rudradeva we are told that he conquered the Yadavas and the king of Orissa.

The Ganapathis of Warangal

Ganapathi, the next important monarch, ascended the throne in 1123 A D. He was the son of Prataparudra and carried on a war of

* See Haig's *Historic Landmarks of the Deccan*, Chap. IV.

† This temple, says Haig, is one of the finest examples of Chalukyan architecture extant and exhibits the best characteristics of that style.

revenge against the Yadavas whose king he humbled. He commenced the building of a stone wall round the city of Warangal, which was completed by his widow Rudramba who followed him. According to the testimony of Marco Polo who touched the Coromandel Coast during her reign. Queen Rudramba ruled the country wisely and well. She finally abdicated the throne in favour of a grandson, Prataparudra II (1291-92 A. D.) This king was the last great Kakatiya. His dominions extended as far as Raichur in the west and Kanchi in the south.*

Queen Rudramba

It was during his time that Malik Kafur entered Telingana. The ruler of Warangal readily submitted and gave the invader a vast quantity of gold and jewels. The Muhammadans under Tughlaq once again entered and attacked Warangal. This time Prataparudra had the nerve to successfully resist the invasion. In the second attack Warangal was captured, and the Raja was taken prisoner and sent to Delhi. Procuring his freedom, Prataparudra came back and held Warangal for two more years as a vassal of the Sultan of Delhi. He died in 1325 A.D. Krishna, his son, succeeded him but almost immediately he retired to Gondavir (Guntur). The Kakatiyas became insignificant and held rule under conditions of alternating vassalage to and defiance of the new Bahmani Sultans that now rose to power in the Deccan. Warangal finally fell into Mussalman hands in 1423 A D.; and the Kakatiyas disappeared from history. Numerous Reddi principalities like Kondavid rose on the ruins of the Kakatiya dominion and flourished for a time.

Muhammadans attack Warangal

The End of the Kingdom

* *The Imperial Gazetteer*, New Edition, Vol. II, p. 343; and *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. VII, p. 128.

CHAPTER XV.

SOUTH INDIA (*Continued*)—DRAVIDIAN CULTURE AND INSTITUTIONS.

SECTION I. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS.

We shall, in this section, take a rapid survey of the social, economic and religious conditions in ancient *Tamilakam.*

Early Division of Tamil Tribes

According to *Tolkappiyam*, the earliest Tamil work extant (*cir.* 3rd century B.C.) the people were divided into five distinct tribes, such as the agricultural tribes, pastoral tribes, fishing tribes and hunting tribes. Corresponding to this organisation of society we have five geographical divisions into which the land was divided, *viz.*, plain, hill, the region between hill and plain, sea-shore and waterless waste.*

The Occupational Division of the People

Caste in the Aryan sense was unknown to the Dravidians originally. The Brahmans who migrated to the Tamil country were responsible for its introduction. For we find a later classification of the Tamil people based partly on birth and partly on occupation like the (1) Rulers, (2) Brahmans, (3) Merchants and (4) *Vellalar*† (agriculturists). It is not a little interesting to note that the Sudra *varna* so prominent in the Aryan classification of

* See *The Tamils 1800 Years Ago*, by V. Kanakasabhai Pillai (1904); and *Tamil Studies I*, by M. Srinivasa Iyengar, p. 62.

† According to Vidwan M. Raghava Aiyangar of the Tamil Lexicon Office, the Vellalas of the Tamil land were the Velirs who came from V(B)elgaum and other places in the Bombay Presidency. The following quotation from *Divakaram*, "வேள் புலவரசர் சளுக்கவேந்தர்" indicates that the Vels were the Chalukyas of history. If so it is interesting to trace how the Vellalas of South India, originally rulers, were reduced to the position of agriculturists.—The theory is open to further modification.

society, had no place in Tolkappiar's division. Nor do we find any mention in the latter of some of the names of the modern depressed classes.

Frequent Wars

The various chiefs who had settled down in the Tamil country were frequently at war with each other, cattle-lifting being a main feature of warfare. The Pandya, Chera and Chola kingdoms soon consolidated themselves, with tribal chiefs living on their frontiers and in the comparatively isolated parts of the interior.

Ancient Dravidian Polity

The administrative principles followed in the ancient Tamil states would appear to have been highly civilised. Monarchy was the rule but it was not of the absolute type. In many cases the rulers had to submit themselves to the advice of councillors and popular assemblies. The first historical glimpse of a governmental organisation in South India is to be sought in a statement of Megasthenes.* It was however left to the Chola Karikala to organise a more elaborate administrative system. He cleared the forests, built cities and fortresses and entrusted the administration of the area round a fortress to a chieftain. Thus arose the *Kottams* of Tondamandalam where the great Chola erected nearly 24 forts, 'each fort to dominate the country around it and be the citadel thereof.'

The Pallavas bring Northern Culture

In the process of administrative evolution in South India, the early Pallavas took an honourable share. They brought to the country a highly systematised set of political and administrative ideas so well-known to the people of North India. The

* Refer to the excellent Chapter (XIX) on Administrative Evolution in South India in Dr. S. K. Aiyangar's *Some Contributions of South India to Indian Culture.*

Mayidavolu grant* issued by Prince Skandavarman is addressed to "the lords of provinces, royal princes, agents, rulers of districts, customs-officers, prefects of countries, etc." Here we have an example of a perfect type of organisation. We do not know if the later Cholas had copied from the Pallavas. In all probability the essential features of the Chola system of administration (described in the previous chapter), were quite indigenous; but there were also doubtless considerable borrowings. The author of the *Sacred Kural* has evidently taken some of his ideas on polity from Aryan works like the *Arthasastra*.†

Kural and Arthasastra

The *Kural* of Tiruvalluvar consists of 133 chapters; and more than half of these are devoted to the science of politics and wealth. The form of government recognised in this work was distinctly monarchic; but the power of the rulers was tempered by the assembly of ministers. Monarchy was nominally hereditary but in practice the ministers took the initiative in the matter of choosing a successor. According to the *Maduraik-kanji*, ministers were expected to speak truth and be fearless in the expression of their opinions. Moreover the priests and the tax-collectors came in close contact with the people. The main functions of government were to provide for the proper defence of the country, to maintain peace within the realm and to plan out measures that would increase the prosperity of the people.

The Main Features of Tamil Policy

* Vide *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. VI, p. 84.

† "The one chapter" says Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar, "bearing upon *upadas* (Chap. 61 of Porul), makes escape from this conclusion impossible." See also Chap. VI of the writer's *Some Contributions of South India to Indian Culture*.

Virtues of Tamils

The ancient Tamils were very hospitable to strangers—that was a virtue which they practised to a fault. Their ethical principles were pitched very high. Like the Spartan mother of old, the Tamil mother instilled into the minds of her sons a spirit of bravery.*

Position of Women in Dravidian India

Women enjoyed great freedom. They mixed freely in society and every day visited the temple. Love-marriages were frequent. Polygamy prevailed to a large extent. Every town had its street of harlots and in the great cities there were educated courtesans.

Food

The food consumed by the ancient Tamils consisted of rice and flesh. Drinking was a prevalent vice with them. Several varieties of intoxicants existed. With the advent of Buddhism and Jainism in the land, the habit of flesh-eating was given up by large sections of the people. This might account for the fighting class having become a separate caste.

Religion

In their primitive stage, the ancient Dravidians were tree- and serpent-worshippers. Many names of devils are preserved and for them many kinds of dances were practised. In later times, mainly due to contact with the Brahman immigrants, they adopted many gods of the Aryan system such as Indra, Vishnu, Varuna etc. But Muruga (later identified with Subrahmanya) seems to be

* The story is narrated in one of the old poems that a mother, when she heard of the false news of her son's escape from the battle-field, vowed that she would cut off her breasts which suckled the boy; then taking a sword in her hand she went to the battle-field and on seeing her son amidst the slain she danced for joy. Like her Spartan sister who, in bidding farewell to her son, asked him to come on the shield or with the shield, the Tamil woman asked her boy to come with wounds on the chest instead of on the back.

essentially a Dravidian deity. There are those who hold for valid reasons that the framework of Dravidian religion and philosophy was essentially indigenous and into it were exactly fitted the conceptions borrowed or adapted from the religious code of the Aryans.

Fine Arts

The Dravidians were good architects. In the field of poetry and the plastic arts they very early exhibited an original bent of mind. They had flutes with eight holes and lutes of many kinds. Painting was one of the six groups into which the ancient Tamils divided the arts.

Economic Activities: Trade and Commerce

The literature of the Tamils is pregnant with allusions to the sea-faring and commercial activities of the people. In very ancient times they traded with the Chaldeans, the Indian teak being among the articles exported. Indian muslins are found wrapped round the mummies of Egypt. The *Tukim* of the Bible is now recognised to be the Tamil word *Thokai* meaning peacock.

Trade between South India and Rome

According to James Kennedy* the Dravidians in the 7th and 6th centuries B.C. had a colony in Babylon. It is an undoubted fact that the Greeks obtained their rice and pepper from the Dravidians as their names for these, *oryza* and *pippali*, clearly indicate. At the dawn of the Christian era there was considerable trade between South India and the Mediterranean. Roman coins in a perfect state of preservation have been found in many places in South India.

The principal ports of Tamilakam were Muziris (Cranganore) in the Chera kingdom, Bakarai (Vaikkari) in the Travancore State, Korkai on the Tamraparni and Puhar (Kaverippattinam) at the mouth of the Kaveri. The chief

* See *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* for 1898: Early Commerce of Babylon with India, 700-300 B.C.; also *ibid*, 1904, R. Sewell's *Roman Coins in India*.

articles of export were pearls, pepper, silk in the web, transparent stones, diamonds, rubies and tortoise shell. Those imported were spices, coral, flint, glass, brass, lead and wine. The choice cotton goods of South India were admired for their texture and purchased in large quantities by the Romans.

Ports of Tamilakam

Indeed in textile industries the ancient Dravidians had attained to considerable skill. Tamil literature has a reference to 36 different kinds of cloth, either woven in the Tamil Nadu or imported from various centres of production.*

Textile Industry

Puhar, at the mouth of the Kaveri, imported horses from distant lands. Tondi, now in the Ramnad district, received *aghil*, fine silk, camphor, silk stuff from China, besides sandal, scents and salt.

Exports and Imports

There should have been a network of good roads connecting various towns and villages, big centres of production. Customs officers existed.† There were colonies of Yavana merchants also settled in the country. Besides the customs-duties, tolls were levied on the roads and at the frontiers of kingdoms.

During the period of the Great Cholas, the Tamils carried on extensive trade with Sumatra, Java and other islands of the Malay Archipelago. Evidences point also to the South Indian colonisation of the Malay Peninsula and Archipelago earlier in history—it may be at the commencemeut of the Pallava rule. Kulot-

Over-Sea Trade of the Tamils

* *Silap.*, p. 886; and *The Ancient Dravidian Industries and Commerce*, a Tamil article by M. Raghava Aiyangar in the *Tamil Antiquary*, No. 8.

† *Pattinappalai*, a Sangham work, says that these "piled up the grain and stored up the things that could not immediately be measured and appraised, leaving them in the dockyards carefully sealed with the tiger-signet of the king."

tunga Chola's neglect of his over-sea dominions led to a large shrinkage of commercial activities in this direction which gradually passed off into the hands of the Arabs. Still the various ports in South India carried on considerable trade but through the agency of the Arabs. Marco Polo, the Venetian traveller, who visited India in the 13th century, writes that Kayal was a busy and flourishing sea-port.

SECTION II. LITERATURE.

It is readily admitted that the Tamils were the earliest among the Dravidian peoples to possess a literature of their own. Tradition ascribes the perfection of the language to Sage Agastya who led a Brahman migration to the extreme south of India about the 7th century B.C. To this sage is attributed a grammatical work that is lost now. At any rate it is certain that by the time of Tolkappiar, the Tamils had developed a decent literature. The date of this grammarian is assigned by scholars to the 3rd century B.C. From the days of Tolkappiar, Sanskrit influence was beginning to be felt and many writers in Tamil were men steeped in northern culture. A few of the poems composed by ancient Tamils about the 1st and 2nd centuries A.D. have come down to us* We gather a good deal of information regarding ancient manners and customs from this kind of literature.

Tamil, an Old Language

Early Compositions

In the opening centuries of the Christian era there existed in Madura a famous academy known as the Tamil Sangham consisting of very learned men. Like the French Academy of the 17th century, the main function of this body would appear to be "to set up a standard of excel-

* Among these may be mentioned the ***Ten Tens*** and also ***Kalithokai*** and ***Patthuppattu*** and the collections known as the ***Ahananuru*** and the ***Purananuru*** — songs sung by court-minstrels and wandering bards,

lence for works which aspire to the dignity of Sangham works." No literary production would be considered as deserving of any merit unless it received the *imprimatur* of the *Sangham* To this august body belonged the famous author of the *Kural*, the great and saintly Tiruvalluvar. It is a didactic work dealing with the four objects of life, *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha.* It is considered as a master-piece of Tamil literature, containing some of the highest and purest expressions of human thought.*

The Augustan Age of Tamil Literature

Another famous writer was Ilango Adigal, a Chera prince, being the brother of Senguttuvan, the Red Chera. He was a Jain by faith and wrote the epic, *Silappadhikaram* (or the Epic of the Anklet), one of the finest poems in the Tamil language, dealing with the story of Kovalan and Kannaki.

Poets of the Sangham Period

Of the five major epics known to modern pandits *Manimekalai* (or 'The Jewel-Belt') is admitted to be the finest. It is a Buddhistic polemical poem. Its author was Sattanar, the friend and contemporary of Ilango Adigal. The epic is styled *Manimekalai* because it narrates the story of Manimekalai, the daughter of Kovalan, the hero of *Silappadhikaram*.

Manimekalai

* "That which above all is wonderful in the *Kurral* is the fact that its author addresses himself, without regard to castes, peoples or beliefs, to the whole community of mankind; the fact that he formulates sovereign morality and absolute reason; that he proclaims in their very essence, in their eternal abstractedness, virtue and truth; that he presents as it were, in one group the highest laws of domestic and social life; that he is equally perfect in thought, in language and in poetry, in the austere metaphysical contemplation of the great mysteries of the Divine Nature, as in the easy and graceful analysis of the tenderest emotions of the heart "—M. Ariel as quoted in page 1 of G. U. Pope's *The Sacred Kurral.* (1886).

Other Epics

The Tamils indeed excelled in epic literature. There have come down to us five major epics and five minor ones.* Many of these were written either by the Jains or by the Buddhists.

From what little has been stated, it is evident that Tamil literature owes a good deal to the Buddhists and the Jains.† Fostering the vernaculars out of opposition to

* The three remaining major epics are *Valayapathi*, *Chintamani*, and *Kundalakesi*. Of these *Valayapathi* is an unpublished Jaina work, treating about the lives of Jain sages. *Kundalakesi* was the second great Tamil work of the Buddhists. The work is probably lost and we know nothing about it except what is given in two extant Jain works. It is the story of a Vaisya girl called Kundalakesi, a staunch Buddhist.

Chintamani

Chintamani is a great Jaina work by the Jaina ascetic Tiruthakka Devar, a scion of the Chola royal family at Vanji or Karur. He probably flourished in the early part of the tenth century. This epic treats of the life of a Jain king, Jivakan. The various incidents connected with this hero are intended to convey several morals. *Chintamani* has been praised by the Jains and the Hindus alike as one of the choicest works of Tamil literature. The work was so popular that in order to counteract its effect, Sekkilar had to undertake the composition of the *Periyapuranam* or the Lives of Saiva Saints—(Sekkilar lived in the 12th century).

The five minor Kavyas are *Nilakesi*, *Brihathkatha* or *Perunkathai*, *Yasodarakavyam*, *Nagakumarakavyam* and *Chulamani*. The first is a Jaina work of uncertain date and authorship. The second was also by a Jain who flourished in the 5th or 6th century A.D. The author is supposed to be one Konguvel. It treats *in extenso* of the life of Udayanakumara, king of Vatsadesa. In style and diction it is supposed to transcend even *Chintamani*. *Yasodarakavyam* is of undoubted Jaina authorship. It is an epitome of "useful, polite and entertaining information calculated to facilitate the improvement of youth and to answer the purpose of a text of general ethics to those more advanced in life" *Chulamani*, the last mentioned work, was written by a Jain. It is based on the *Mahapurana* of the Jains. Renouncement of worldly pleasures and the attainment of Moksha are the main themes treated in it. It is dedicated to *Avani-Chulamani*, father of the Pandyan king, Sendan (about 650 A.D), in whose reign the work was composed.

† *Virasoliyam* by Buddhamitra is a poetical treatise on Tamil Grammar. The work was dedicated to Vira Rajendra Chola (1062 A.D.); hence its name. The author was a Buddhist. More spacious were the literary productions of the Tamil Jains. Besides those already mentioned,

the Brahmans, the Jains infused Aryan thought and learning among the southern people, which had the effect of awakening Dravidian literature to proclaim the new message it had received from northern lands.*

Jains and Tamil Literature

Literature in the time of the Pallavas was largely exegetical in character. That was the period of Vaishnava Alwars and Saiva Nayanmars. The hymns and songs composed by these saints in honour of their respective gods form the sacred possession of the Tamils. The Vaishnavite hymns were later on incorporated into the *Nalayira-Prabandham*; while the songs of the Saiva Adiyars which lay scattered were collected and arranged into eleven *Tirumurais*, by Nambiandar Nambi (975-1035 A.D.)

Literature in the Pallava Age

The twelfth century A.D. is a great age in the history of Tamil literature. In this age flourished some of the greatest Tamil poets of the mediæval period. Thus there was Jayankondan, the *Kavichakravarthi* and the court poet of Kulottunga I; and he wrote the classic *Kalingattupparani*. In all likelihood the famous commentator Adiyarkkunallar did not live much later. In the time of Kulottunga II, Sekkilar, the Saiva saint, composed the *Periapuranam*. Immortal Kambar, the translator of the *Ramayana*, Ottakuttan who composed three famous *Ulas*, and Pugalendi of *Nalavenba* fame—all these adorned the Chola court in the period 1118 to 1178 A.D. With the

In the Time of the Later Cholas

we have a lexicon, called *Chudamani Nigantu* by Mandalapurudar (middle of the 10th century A.D); several grammatical treatises such as *Yapparungalam* and *Karikai*, both standard works on prosody; *Neminadam* of Guna Vira Pandita (12th century) and *Nannul* of Pavanandi (13th century). In the field of ethics, mention must be made of the following books written by the Jains: *Naladiyar*, *Palamoli*, *Aranericharam* and *Sirupanochamalai*.

Other Jain and Buddhist Books

* *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. XXII, p. 219.

coming in of the Muhammadans in the 14th century, the classical period of Tamil literary history comes to a close.

Canarese Literature

Next to the Tamils, the Canarese possess a rich literature. But in their early efforts they exhibited very little of originality, most of their productions being either translations or adaptations from Sanskrit books. The Jains were the originators of Canarese literature. 'Until the middle of the twelfth century it is exclusively Jain.'* But the Jains had written not only from sectarian motives but also from a love of science.† The tenth century was a period of literary development in the Canarese country.

Poets and men of learning received ample patronage at the hands of the Hoysalas whose settled rule of Mysore brought to prominence a host of authors, Jaina, Saiva and Lingayat.‡ When we reach the 13th century, we find a band of distinguished Jain poets.

Telugu Literature

It is the proud privilege of the Telugus, Andhras as they are now called, to possess one of the sweetest and finest languages in the world, the Telugu. It has a fine though not very expansive literature; but much of it, almost the whole of it, is of modern growth. The first attempts, says a learned Telugu scholar, to reduce the uses of the language to rule, were made late in the 11th century by Nannayabhata, who also translated the first three books of the *Mahabharata*.||

A greater part of Telugu literature consists merely of translations or adaptations from Sanskrit literature. The Augustan age of Telugu literature was the age of Krishna-

* E P. Rice : *The History of Canarese Literature*, p. 11.

† *The Indian Antiquary*, Vol, IV, 1875, p. 15.

‡ The Lingayat authors appear to have evinced considerable originality in their works.

|| *Some Mile-Stones in Telugu Literature*, by G. R. Subramiah Pantulu.

deva Raya, who was a great patron of learning; and the most famous of the poets who gathered round him was Allasani Peddana,* 'the Grandsire of Telugu Poetry,' 'the pioneer of original poetical composition' in Telugu.

The Age of Krishnadevaraya

Besides Peddana, other poets also existed in the court of Krishnadeva Raya, such as Nandi Timmana, the author of *Parijatapaharana*.

SECTION III. RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT.

We shall now trace the history of religious movements in the Dravidian country. According to many scholars the religion of the ancient Dravidian consisted of devil-dancing and the worship of spirits supposed to reside in trees. At a later stage, *Linga* worship and veneration of serpents formed part of his faith. The Brahman immigrants from the North settling in the land from about the 7th century B.C. brought with them the Aryan religion which was gradually assimilated by the Dravidians. Still the ground-work was essentially Dravidian; only the superstructure was Aryan. The Brahmans introduced gradually into the Tamil land some of the main features of their social organisation such as the caste system. By the practice of virtues and by his own exemplary conduct, the Brahman in the Dravidian country gained a social position,† which was useful to him in propagating what we may call *Brahmanism*. No wonder that in the early centuries of the Christian era, Brah-

Early Dravidian Religion

Northern Influences

* His best known work is entitled *Svarochisha Manucharita*, the materials for which he gathered from the *Markandeya Purana*. This is the charming story of a Brahman, Pravarakhya, who entertained the ambition to reach the summit of the Himalayas and of the birth of Svarochisha Manu.

† In ancient Tamil literature, the Brahmans are called 'great men,' the 'noblemen,' 'the truth speakers' and 'the gods on earth.'

manism had advanced so far that Krishna, Baladeva, Vasudeva, and Indra were beginning to be worshipped by the Tamils. At Puhar or Kaverippattinam a special festival for Indra was instituted. Some of the most ancient Chola and Pandya kings are said to have performed many sacrifices with the help of the Brahmans.

The Advent of Jainism

This religion of the Brahmans was however subject to attacks by the Jains and Buddhists. The former had settled in the South even before the days of Chandragupta Maurya. Mention has already heen made of the advent of the Jain ascetic Bhadrabahu (before 297 B.C.) to the Mysore country. From that time onward the Jains were steadily gaining ground in the Tamil country.* It is evident that by the 2nd century A.D. Jainism had taken a deep root in the country. In the fifth century it was further patronised by the Kalabhras, a 'Vadugu-Carnataka people' who conquered Madura and ruled there for a short time. At the instance of the Madura Jains, these Kalabhras persecuted the Saivites. It was about this time that *Naladiyar* was composed by the Jains.

Pandyan Kings patronise it

Even after the Kalabhras were driven out of the country, some of the Pandyan kings professed Jainism. But in the middle half of the 7th century A.D., the Saiva saint Sambandar converted Kun Pandya of Madura from Jainism to Saivism. This led to the decay of that religion in the Pandya country.

* The series of *Brahmi* inscriptions of the Asokan period found in the three districts of Madura, Ramnad and Tinnevelly are presumably to be attributed to the Jains who occupied the caves in which these were found inscribed. The *Silappadhikaram* mentions the existence of many Jaina temples both in the Chola and Pandya countries. The author of the epic, *Ilango-Adigal*, was himself a Jain. Madura was the chief centre of Jainism. The Tamil Jains of the Sangham period worshipped the resplendent image of *Arhat* who was represented as sitting under the

Saiva Saints and Jainism

While Sambandar was thus successfully struggling against the Madura Jains, his contemporary Appar, known also as Tirunavukkarasar, was doing a similar work in the Pallava country. He, as has already been stated, converted Mahendravarman to Saivism. It was through the Saiva Nayanmars that Jainism was stamped out of the Tamil land. In this task of destroying an alien faith, the Vaishnava Alwars also had some share. Many of its followers embraced Saivism and the few that could not do so fled to Mysore where they found a better asylum. Jainism had a brighter history in the Canarese country. The Ganga kings of Mysore (*cir*. 200–1000 A.D.) patronised it to a large extent.*

Jainism in the Kanarese Country

The history of Buddhism in the Dravidian country is less interesting. Long before the time of Asoka, the doctrines of the faith were familiar to the people. The Buddha himself is supposed to have visited the Naga country in South India and Ceylon. Although Asoka did not carry on active propaganda in the Tamil country, individual Buddhist saints must have spread Buddhism

Buddhism

Asoka tree with the triple umbrella held over him. The Tamil sovereigns appear to have been tolerant towards all foreign faiths. *Manimekhalai* gives us a pretty accurate account of the N grantha (Jaina) system as was preached in the Tamil land.

* It became the state creed in the time of Mushkara or Mukhara (6th century A.D.). Avanita (480–482 A.D.) the Ganga king, 6th in succession from Madhava, the founder, was a Jain. Durvinita who succeeded Avanita was a disciple of the famous Jain Grammarian aud Guru, Pujyapada. Of the other Ganga Rajas special mention must be made of Rachamalla Satyavakya (807–907) who tried to revive the waning influence of the Jains. It was during his reign that the famous Chamundaraya, his minister, erected the colossal statue of Gomatesvara. When Mysore came under the sway of the Hoysalas, the latter gave a stimulus to the cause of Jainism. The period of Jaina decline commences with the conversion of Vishnuvardhana from Jainism to Vaishnavism. The great Vaishnava Reformer, Ramanuja, was responsible for this conversion.

throughout the Tamil land. In the early centuries of the Christian era Nagapattinam in the Chola country and Conjeevaram in Tondaimandalam were the centres of Buddhism. It is also said that at the former place a Buddhist missionary institution had been started by Mahendra, a younger brother of Asoka. That Buddhism was allowed to be preached at Puhar is evident from *Manimekhalai*, the author of which was himself a follower of the Buddha. From the same epic we learn that Conjeevaram contained many Buddhist monasteries.

Buddhism *vs.* Other Sects

Buddhism had to contend much against rival faiths, both Brahmanism and Jainism. All forces joined together to weaken this sect. However when Hiuen Tsang visited Conjeevaram in 640 A.D., he found 100 Buddhist monasteries tenanted by 10,000 monks. It was in this capital of the Pallavas that the famous Buddhist metaphysician Dharmapala, the teacher of the Chinese Pilgrim, was born (7th century). Frequent disputations seem to have taken place between the Buddhists on the one hand and the Jains and the Brahmanical sectarians on the other.*

Final Disappearance of Buddhism

But what procured the final expulsion of Buddhist missionaries from South India was their defeat in one such dispute in Conjeevaram (788 A.D.) Yet Buddhism persisted in the land. From the Leyden Grants we learn that there were two Buddhist temples about the end of the 11th century in the Chola country. Again

* Thus the Saiva saint Tirugnana Sambanda is said to have had religious contests with the Buddhists at Telichery (Tanjore District) and defeated one Buddha Nandi, their leader (7th century). The Vaishnava saint Tirumangai Alwar (8th century) had similar contests with them and he is said to have carried away the golden idol of the Buddha from Negapatam to meet the expenses of building the temple walls at Srirangam. Another religious contest that we know of was between Manikkavasagar and the Ceylon Buddhists at Chidambaram.

as late as the 13th century there was a colony of Buddhists in the district of South Arcot.

In this task of putting down the heretical faiths, Jainism and Buddhism, the Saiva Nayanmars and Vaishnava Alwars took a prominent part. These were responsible for the organization of a new cult, the school of Bhakti or intense devotion to a personal god. Thus there developed two schools of Bhakti—Saivism and Vaishnavism.

The School of Bakti

'Saivism consists in the recognition of Siva as the supreme beneficent deity' endowed with the qualities of protection, creation and destruction. The founders of this school were known as *Nayanmars*—men of saintly character whose love for Siva knew no bounds. Saiva canonical literature recognises 63 of them. More important of these were Appar, Sambandar, Sundarar and Manikkavasakar. The hymns and songs of these saints were soul-stirring and they constantly peregrinated the country creating unbounded enthusiasm among their followers and condemning other heretical sects. The songs of the first three saints were collected together and are known as *Thevaram*; while the fourth saint's works are called *Tiruvachakam*. The Nayanmars flourished roughly in the age of the Pallavas. They were also responsible for inaugurating the era of temple-building in South India.

Nayanars

The age of the Vaishnava Alwars extends from about 200 A.D. to 800 A.D. There were 12 such saints.* They composed hymns in honour of Vishnu in his various manifestations or Avatars. "The works of these Alwars and their poems of devotion are admittedly

The Age of the Alwars

* The Alwars fall into three groups, the early, the middle and the later ones.—(Dr. S. K. Aiyangar: *Some Contributions of South India to Indian Culture*, pp. 232, *ff*) Their names are:- Poygaialvar, Budattalvar, Peyalvar and Tirumalisaialvar; Nammalvar, Madhurakavi, Kulasekhara, Periyalvar and his daughter Andal; Tondaradippodi, Tirup-panalvar and Tirumangaialvar.

renderings of the teachings of the Veda and the Vedic literature to a far greater degree than even the literature of the Saiva Adiyars." They are being sung daily in the Vaishnavite temples in the course of worship. These twin schools of the Bhakti movement combined their forces to annihilate the non-Vedic faiths such as Jainism and Buddhism and when that battle was won, turned against each other, as the mutual recriminations evidenced by the songs of both the sects clearly show.

The Great Acharyas: Sankara

Then came the Great Acharyas, theological doctors of learning, who, each according to his own way, revivified Hinduism. Foremost among them was Sankaracharya. He was a Nambudiri Brahman of Malabar and became a Sanyasin while he was in his teens. He travelled extensively throughout India. At Benares he came in contact with many men of learning. The most famous of his writings were his commentaries on the *Upanishads*, the *Vedanta Sutras* and the *Bhagavat Gita* He was the founder of the Adwaita system of philosophy The result of Sankara's teachings was the foundation of the *Smartha* sect of Brahmans. Sankaracharya was also known as the *Jagad-Guru* (world-pontiff), a title which was justified as he had no equal in spiritual learning. He also established various *Mutts*, the most important being the one at Sringeri. "His missionary work largely contributed to the downfall of Buddhism in Northern India." Sankara died at the very early age of 32. His date is still a matter of controversy but it probably falls in the eighth century after Christ.

Ramanuja

In the 11th century A.D., Dravidian India gave birth to another intellectual giant, the founder of the Visishtadwaita philosophy, revered and loved by the Vaishnavas, Ramanuja. The period of Ramanuja's discipleship was spent at Conjeevaram. Ramanuja's fame soon attracted

the attention of the learned, and in due course he was appointed to succeed Alavandar, a great Vaishnava Acharya.* He had his head-quarters at Srirangam near Trichinopoly. The chief object of Ramanuja was to get the Vaishnavas together and provide them with an organisation. He wrote a commentary, according to Vaishnava teaching, on the *Brahmasutras*.

His Work

"After a varied life, Ramanuja succeeded in providing for the permanent continuance of the teachings of these commentaries and various other works. * * He had to carry on controversies with the *Advaitins*, generally called Mayavadins, with the Jains and with others even including the Saivas. He succeeded in his mission so far as to put Vaishnavism on a permanent footing." Ramanuja was a reformer in one sense. He laid down that " whatever be the position of a man or woman in society, one stood as near to God as anyone else, provided one kept to the high requirements of godly life." Fearing the Chola, Ramanuja fled to Mysore, where he converted the Hoysala king to Vaishnavism and thus laid the foundation for the spread of Vaishnavism in Mysore.

Madhava

The third great Acharya to establish a new sect was Madhwacharya. He founded the Dwaita system of philosophy. He was a native of Udipi in South Canara and was born in 1199 He addressed himself mainly to the Brahmans and his followers are known as Madhwas. Like Ramanuja he also wrote commentaries on the *Brahma Sutras*, the *Vedanta Sutras* and the *Gita* but they differed in interpretation. He was a follower of Vishnu and held the adoration of Siva in scorn.

* Acharyas or preceptors are those who carried on the work of the Alwars, men who were 'not so near to the divine but still much raised above the ordinary men of the world.' These Vaishnavite apostles are traced from Nathamuni, the first Acharya. Ramanuja was the seventh in succession. For a fuller account of the life of Ramanuja, the student is referred to Chapter VII, *Ancient India*, by Dr. S. K. Aiyangar; and to *Sri Ramanujacharya* by S. K. Iyengar and T. Rajagopalacharya.

APPENDIX A.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

Cir. 3000-2000 B.C. The Age of the Indus Valley Discoveries —Probable beginning of Aryan invasions.

Cir. 1400 B.C. The Boghaz Koi Inscriptions.

„ 1200–1200 B.C. (Lower limit of) the Age of the Rig Veda.

„ 800–500 B.C. Age of the Upanishads.

„ 600 B.C. Religious ferment.

599–527 B.C. Life of Mahavira, the Jina.

487 (or 483) B.C. Death of the Buddha—1st Buddhist Council.

Cir. 600–321 B.C. The Rise of Magadha under the Sisunagas and the Nandas.

Cir. 600–200 B.C. Age of the Sutras.

* { 519 B.C. Accession of Bimbisara.
491 B.C. Do. of Ajatasatru. (Pataliputra built).

558–536 B.C. Cyrus the Great of Persia.

522–486 B.C. Darius rules over Persia ; he conquers the Punjab and the Indus Valley about 518 B.C.

Cir. 350 B.C. Probable age of Panini.

328–327 B.C. Alexander's campaigns on the Hindu Kush and in Paropanisadai.

326 B.C. July (?)—The battle of the Hydaspes.
Sept.—Alexander's retreat from the Beas.

325 B.C. His withdrawal from India.

323 B.C. His death.

323–321 B.C. Overthrow of the Nandas and the accession of Chandragupta Maurya—The Maurya Dynasty.

317 B.C. Complete disappearance of Macedonian rule in India.

Cir. 303 B.C. Chandragupta's victory over Seleukos Nikator. Cession of the Trans-Indian provinces to the Mauryan Emperor.

* These dates are pushed back by some to 582 and 554 B.C. respectively.

Cir. 302 B.C. Megasthenes at Pataliputra.

Cir. 300 B.C. Probable date of compilation of the Artha-Sastra,

Cir. 298 B.C. End of Chandragupta's reign—His migration with Bhadrabahu to the Mysore country.

298–273 B.C. The reign of Bindusara.

274–273 B.C. Accession of Asoka.

270–269 B.C. Asoka's Coronation.

262–261 B.C. Conquest of Kalinga.

258–257 B.C. (?) Issue of the Fourteen Rock Edicts.

Cir. 250–50 B.C. First phase of Buddhist architecture.

253 B.C. (?) Convening of the Buddhist Church Council —Completion of the Pali Canon.

237–236 B.C. The death of Asoka.

Cir. 250–248 B.C. Revolt of Bactria and Parthia against the Seleucids.

Cir. 230–200 B.C. Establishment of the Andhra-Satavahana power—Stupas of Amaravati, etc.

Cir. 190 B.C. Demetrius, the Bactrian, conquers portions of the Punjab and Sind.

Cir. 184 B.C. The extinction of the Mauryas, and the rise of Pushyamitra Sunga.

184–72 B.C. The Rule of the Sungas.

Cir. 175–161 B.C. Eukratides conquers the Kabul Valley, etc.; Menander's invasion of India.

Rival Greek powers in the Kabul Valley and in the Punjab.

Cir. 169 B.C. Kharavela of Kalinga begins to reign.

Cir. 156 B.C. The Hathigumpha Inscription of Kharavela.

Cir. 150 B.C. Date of Patanjali, the Grammarian.

Cir. 140–120 B.C. Saka occupation of Herat and Seistan.

Cir. 90 B.C. Heliodorus' embassy to King Bhagabhadra.

Cir. 75 B.C. Scythian occupation of the Lower Indus Valley (*Saka-dwipa*).

Maues (the Great King Moga) conquers Taxila and the Punjab from the Greeks. Beginning of Saka Satrapies and of Pahlava rule in the Punjab.

72 B.C. End of the Sungas.

72–27 B.C. Rule of the Kanvas.

58 B.C. Foundation of the Vikrama Era—Azes I—Expulsion of the Scythians.

Cir. 50 B.C. Final extinction of Sagala and of Greek rule in India.

Cir. 15 A.D. Consolidation of the Yueh-chi tribes into the Kushana Empire.

Cir. 19–45 A.D. Rule of Gondophernes — Mission of St. Thomas to India

Cir. 20 A.D. Kadphises I conquers Kabul.

Cir. 50–400 A.D. Flourishing of Indian plastic art.

55 A.D. Accession of Kadphises II.

78 A.D. Establishment of the Saka Era—Accession of Kanishka.*

Cir. 90 A.D. *The Periplus of the Indian Ocean*, written.

Cir. 91–110 Kushan war with the Chinese.

Cir 100 A.D. Ascendancy of the Early Cholas — Tamil *Sangham* Age.

Cir. 106–158 A.D. Rule of Gautamiputra and Vasishtiputra—Revival of Andhra-Satavahana power.

115 A.D. General Church Council of Buddhism—Rise of Mahayana.

123 A.D. Death of Kanishka.

138 A.D. Latest known date of Huvishka.

Cir. 140 A.D. Chashtana's rise to power.

Cir. 150 A.D. Rudradaman the Great Satrap; his famous Girnar Inscription—Gandhara art flourishes.

Cir. 176 A.D. Latest known date of Vasudeva Kushana—Flourishing of Asvagosha.

Cir. 180 A.D. Yajna Sri Satavahana.

Cir. 200 A.D. The Satavahanas lose Maharashtra.
—Age of the earlier frescoes at Ajanta.
—Nagarjuna flourishes.

Cir. 230 A.D. Extinction of the Satavahanas—Simultaneous disappearance of the Kushanas and the Parthians.

* Some say that Kadphises II ruled from 78 to about 110 A.D. and Kanishka ascended the throne about 120 A.D.

Cir. 200–300 A.D. Rise of the Abhiras, Early Pallavas, etc.
Cir. 300 A.D. Rise of the Vakatakas.
Cir. 300–450 A.D. Brahmanical revival.
319–20 A.D. Foundation of the Gupta Era.
—Establishment of the Gupta Empire by Chandragupta I.
Cir. 330 A.D. Accession of Samudragupta.
Flourishing of Vasubhandu.
Cir 350 A.D Conquests of Samudragupta completed.
Cir. 352–379 A D. King Meghavarna of Ceylon who sent an embassy to Samudragupta about 360 B C.
Cir. 375–413 A.D. Rule of Chandragupta II, Vikramaditya
Cir. 388–389 A.D. Final Gupta Conquest of the Western Satraps.
405–411 A.D Fa Hien, the Chinese Pilgrim in India.
415–455 A.D. Rule of Kumaragupta. Kalidasa's age (?)
Cir. 420 A.D The Huns cross the Oxus.
Cir 450 A.D. War of the Guptas with the Pushyamitras.
455–467 A.D. Rule of Skandagupta.
First Hun invasion.
454 A D. Jain Church Council of Valabhi
467–473 A.D Rule of Puragupta and Narasimhagupta.
476 A.D Birth of Aryabhatta, the Astronomer.
Cir. 480–490 A.D Gupta power begins to break up
484 A.D The Huns defeated King Firoz of Persia.
Cir. 490 A.D. Renewed invasion of India by the Huns under Toramana ;
Starting of the dynasty of the Maitrakas at Valabhi
Cir 500 A.D Amarasinha, the Lexicographer.
Cir. 510 A.D. Mihiragula succeeds Toramana.
Cir. 520 A.D. Sung Yun, the Chinese pilgrim, in India.
Cir. 533 A.D Defeat of Mihiragula by Yasodharman.
Cir. 533–540 A.D. Mihiragula in Kashmir.
Cir. 535–720 A.D. The Later Guptas of Malwa.
Cir. 550 A.D. The Rise of the Early Chalukyas of Badami. (Pulakesin I).

Cir. 563–567 A.D. Final destruction of the Hun power in the Oxus Valley.

567 A.D. Accession of Kirtivarman Chalukya.

Cir. 575 A.D. Flourishing of the Maukbaris of Kanauj—Varahamihira's age.

Cir. 590 A.D. Rise of the Great Pallava line under Simhavishnu.

Cir. 600 A.D. Hiuen-Tsang born.

Cir 600–630 A.D. Mahendravarman Pallava (Epoch of Cave-Temples in S. India).

606 A.D. Rajyavardhana of Thanesvar—Accession of Harshavardhana (Era of Harsha)—Union of Kanauj and Thanesvar.

606—612 A.D. Harsha's *Digvijaya.*

608 A.D. Accession of Pulakesin II Chalukya.

610 A.D. Conquest of Vengi by Pulakesin II.

Cir. 615 A.D. Independence of the Eastern Chalukyas of Vengi lasting till 1070 A.D.

Cir. 620 A.D. Repulse of Harsha by Pulakesin II Chalukya.

629–645 A.D. Hiuen-Tsang's travels in India.

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